■ World / A11

Rove leaked name of US spy to media–Newsweek

■ Metro / A18

Makati RTC junks MMDA appeal on traffic ticketing, apprehension

■ Sports / A19

World's biggest badminton stars plunge into action in MVP Cup today

■ News / A2

Drilon claims GMA didn't stop dirty deals

Cebu men's club stands firm on vasectomy

I'M NOT HALF THE MAN I USED TO BE

By Blanche S. Rivera

CEBU CITY—The province which gave Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo a massive one-million-vote margin in last year's election has a new advoca-

CEBU/ A8

PHILIPPINE DAILY
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website: www.inq7.net

No GMA influence on e-VAT freeze–SC

By Armand N. Nocum and Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

THE SUPREME Court yesterday denied allegations that President Macapagal-Arroyo influenced it into stopping the implementation of the expanded value-added tax (e-VAT).

In a statement, the high court debunked ac-

NO GMA/ A16

RP credit rating in peril

Whatever happened to magic of Cory?

By Michael Lim Ubac

IS THE Cory magic gone?

Last week, the woman who sparked a revolt that toppled a dictator asked for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo. She repeated her appeal yesterday.

Former President Corazon Aquino's call has remained unheeded. Some have ignored it. Others have rejected it outright.

Politicians who have seen the Cory magic work recalled how it wrought wonders among the masses, the middle class and civil society in two pivotal moments in the country's history.

Now, in a battle among the elite and the powerbrokers, it appears to have lost its potency, they said.

When Aquino came out Friday to ask Ms Arroyo to make the "supreme sacrifice" of resigning for the sake of the country, many had thought her call would send the Arroyo presidency crashing

WHATEVER/ A16

CORY Aquino is in deep prayer during a Mass at the De La Salle University where she renewed her call for Ms Arroyo to resign. She said she was prepared to accept criticisms for her actions. REM ZAMORA

AMID demands for her to step down, President Macapagal-Arroyo gives the thumbs-up sign, suggesting her confidence that she will weather the storm. EDWIN BACASMAS

Fitch, S&P say outlook on country 'negative'

By Doris C. Dumlao
Business

THE POLITICAL crisis is hurting the economy.

Stocks fell and the peso weakened after global rating agencies Fitch and Standard & Poor's downgraded yesterday their outlook on the country from "stable" to "negative."

In making the downgrade, Fitch and S&P cited not only political uncertainty amid calls for President Macapagal-Arroyo to step down but also doubts about the administration's political will to pursue unpopular reforms such as the expanded value-added tax (e-VAT), needed to restore fiscal health.

The move by the credit rating agencies caused the peso to close at 56.22 from Friday's 56.10 against the US dollar and the benchmark Philippine Stock Exchange Index to drop 1.3 percent to 1,852.78 after a two-day, 3.5-percent gain.

A revision in the outlook on the Philippine sovereign foreign currency means that a downgrade by

RP CREDIT/ A16

GMA eyes constituent assembly

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr. and Juliet Labog-Javellana

MALACAÑANG yesterday indicated that President Macapagal-Arroyo was seriously considering the proposal of former President Fidel V. Ramos to convene Congress into a constituent assembly to fast-track constitutional reforms and defuse the current political crisis.

As a first step toward this direction, Ms Arroyo is pushing to merge her Kabalikat ng Malayang Pilipino (Kampi) with Lakas-Christian and Muslim Democrats (Lakas) under Ramos and Speaker Jose de Venecia. The merger would make Lakas the single

GMA/ A9

Pope's hand seen in CBCP declaration

By Christian V. Esguerra

POPE Benedict XVI had a haunting message during the weekend deliberations of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines on the worst political crisis confronting President Macapagal-Arroyo: priests should not meddle in politics.

Apostolic Nuncio Antonio Franco, the Vatican ambassador to the country, was the messenger. Depending on the political persuasion of the bishops who recalled Franco's address to the prelates on Saturday, it was either a lecture or a gentle reminder of the Church hierarchy's prophetic role in society.

The gist of Franco's remarks, as Archbishop Oscar Cruz later put it, was "we should not get directly involved in politics."

Cruz, who is leading a crusade against illegal gambling that has implicated Ms Arroyo's family, said Franco called on the bishops to be "guided only by Gospel truths and speak only on the moral dimension of the issue."

In a nation with a history of priests taking up arms in the hills and leading protests in the streets, the 81 bishops who attended the two-day annual meeting at the Pope Pius Center in Manila saw fit to remind themselves who they were.

In a statement titled "Restoring Trust: A Plea for Moral Values," which was released at the end of their meeting, the bishops said:

POPE'S/ A6

Bishops' statement draws cheers, jeers

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and TJ Burgonio

IN DECIDING to stay away from a chorus of demands for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo, Roman Catholic bishops acted as saviors to a damsel in distress, getting jeers and cheers in the process.

"My message to the Arroyo enemies is: Goodbye, boys. You gave it your best shot, but she's still standing. Time to disappear into the woodwork, and sweet dreams," said Sen. Miriam Defensor Santiago.

Santiago said Ms Arroyo's enemies cannot deny there was a plot against her, referring to seven Cabinet secretaries who resigned and ignited mass desertion of the President's former allies in business and politics, including ex-President Corazon Aquino.

"Are you kidding me? The plot to oust President Arroyo was visible in the kamikaze-style lightning attack last Friday," the administration senator said. She said the script called for a "series of body blows, closely following each other."

"The plotters expected this barrage of blows to leave the nation breathless. But it turns out that with the CBCP (Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines) statement, the Arroyo enemies are now the ones who have run out of wind," Santiago said.

She said the opposition again planned to mobilize 50,000 peo-

BISHOPS/ A6

IN THE KNOW

What's a credit rating?

International rating agencies provide a way of assessing a country's ability to pay its debts.

A deteriorating credit rating can affect a country's ability to service debts because it raises the cost of borrowing. If rating agencies recognize weakening fundamentals, then a downgrade can serve as a signal and precede the onset of a crisis.

A credit rating also affects an issuer's or borrower's access to capital.

–Maricar Tolosa, PDI Research

GLORIA RESIGN
LET GO! LET GOD!
GLORIA RESIGN!

MILITANT priest Fr. Robert Reyes and other religious leaders launch a protest fast at the People Power Monument to press for Ms Arroyo's resignation. Roman Catholic bishops refused to endorse their call. JOAN BONDOC

MS ARROYO rallies her political troops from the provinces as she battles a campaign to force her out of office. She seems to bask in the support of mayors during their visit to Malacañang. Presidential aides accuse those demanding her resignation of "intellectual dishonesty." EDWIN BACASMAS

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WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Mindanao will experience mostly cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. Luzon and Visayas will have partly cloudy to cloudy skies with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms mostly in the afternoon or evening.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: CYRIL L. BONABENTE, PDI RESEARCH/07/12/05

Metro Manila	Partly Cloudy	Iloilo/Bacolod	Partly Cloudy
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Partly Cloudy
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Partly Cloudy
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Partly Cloudy
Clark Zone	Partly Cloudy	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Partly Cloudy	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Partly Cloudy	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Partly Cloudy	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

'Erap factor' key to Senate battle

By Juliet Labog-Javellana, TJ Burgonio and Christine O. Avendaño

ADMINISTRATION SEN. Miriam Defensor-Santiago yesterday said the next battle is for the Senate presidency with the "Erap factor," referring to detained President Joseph Estrada, determining the Senate's new configuration.

Santiago said the issue of who should be the Senate president is important because of the impeachment process which the administration hopes would be the process to resolve the charges of electoral fraud and betrayal of public trust against the President.

"The Senate president will play a pivotal role in the impeachment, that is why the Senate presidency will be a cliffhanger," Santiago said.

She added that if the House of Representatives would decide to send the articles of impeachment to the Senate, the chamber, led by the Senate president, would make an initial decision on what to do with the impeachment. Only then can the chamber be convened as an impeachment court.

She said senators and congressmen were not expected to vote along partylines in the impeachment.

"If a politician thinks that his chances of reelection will be substantially affected, all loyalty to the President and the party ends," Santiago said.

She said the chances of Senate President Franklin Drilon staying on as Senate president were "very dim" after he figured in the Cabinet resignations and after the Liberal Party, which Drilon heads, called on the President to resign.

Santiago also said that the "Erap factor" would determine the new configuration in the Senate.

She said Estrada's allies in the Senate could provide the "swing votes" that would decide the new Senate president.

"It is wrong and simplistic to say that the Senate minority of nine, plus the Liberal Party of four equals a majority of 13 in the Senate. This equation can only hold true if former President Estrada accepts the LP group headed by Drilon who was part of the extra-constitutional process that led to Estrada's removal even before the impeachment trial had been concluded," Santiago said in a statement.

Senate sources said Estrada was not supportive of either Drilon or Sen. Manuel Villar, who, when he was Speaker, transmitted the articles of impeachment of Estrada to the Senate.

Drilon confident

Drilon, however, said he was confident he would keep his post despite speculations that his decision to break away from President Macapagal-Arroyo had weakened his hold on the upper chamber's leadership.

"But I will not be surprised if Malacañang moves to rearrange the leadership of the Senate. They have done that in the past. I don't see why they will not do it again," Drilon said yesterday in a press briefing. "But I am confident that the senators will think independently. The senators are people who would make decisions not on the basis of Malacañang's call."

Drilon said he would "willingly give the post to whoever is elected" if 13 senators vote to unseat him after the opening of Congress late this month. He stressed that no election will happen unless someone moves to declare the position vacant.

"The Senate leadership is the gift of 13 senators," he said.

A new majority

Senate sources said Malacañang had already asked some senators to form a "new majority" and elect a new Senate president. But Senate President Pro Tempore Juan Flavier denied this, saying there were no such moves yet.

Administration senators appeared hesitant to challenge Drilon to step down as Senate president, afraid to upset the delicate 14-9 equation in favor of the administration bloc. There are four LP senators, including Drilon.

"That is a matter that we should discuss very carefully," Sen. Richard Gordon said. He said that while Drilon and the LP committed a "failure of judgment," they could live with Drilon at the helm.

Flavier, a member of the ruling Lakas-CMD, said he saw no reason why Drilon should be replaced.

"I support him as Senate president," Flavier said.

He added that the Senate had traditionally been independent of Malacañang.

No meddling

Although disappointed with Drilon's "big turnaround," Malacañang would not interfere or comment on Drilon's fate in the administration-controlled Senate, according to Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye.

"This is something that is internal to the Senate and I don't think we should meddle in the affairs of the Senate," was how Bunye dodged questions on what action the Palace would take after Drilon called for the President's resignation last week.

Bunye, however, couldn't hide how he felt about Drilon's move.

"I'm really puzzled how he (Drilon) could make a big turnaround after praising the President to high heavens when she visited Iloilo days before," Bunye said.

He was referring to Ms Arroyo's visit to Iloilo late last month when Drilon had publicly told the Chief Executive that she could move the office of the President there.

Black propaganda

Drilon also decried a Malacañang-instigated black propaganda against himself, former President Corazon Aquino, Liberal Party senators and Cabinet men who broke away from Ms Arroyo.

"They even threatened the (resigned) Cabinet members with sedition. I can assure Malacañang that this will not succeed because the truth is on our side," he said yesterday.

Part of the propaganda being peddled by government officials was that Aquino, the LP senators and the 10 resigned Cabinet officials conspired to call for Ms Arroyo's resignation last Friday to bring down her government, Drilon said.

Another lie being spread around was that Drilon and the Cabinet men had struck a deal with Vice President Noli de Castro, the President's constitutional successor, in view of the looming resignation of Ms Arroyo, he added.

"We appeal to the media to be more discerning of this black propaganda emanating from Malacañang because this is part of the operation 'Save the Titanic,'" Drilon said, even as he belied the conspiracy theories peddled by government officials.

Drilon claims GMA didn't stop dirty deals

SENATE President Franklin Drilon, who has cut ties with President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo, said yesterday he warned her of alleged irregularities in a major Chinese-funded railway project and other government deals, but that she did nothing to stop corruption.

Drilon said Ms Arroyo's inaction persuaded him last week to withdraw the support of his influential Liberal Party from the ruling coalition backing Ms Arroyo, and to ask her to resign.

The party's withdrawal coincided with other major defections, including the resignations of 7 Cabinet members and three agency heads, over allegations the President cheated in last year's election.

Drilon said he recently warned the President that NorthRail, a multimillion-dollar Chinese government-funded railway project in the northern Philippines, was riddled with corruption. He also said he informed her of massive corruption at the Bureau of Customs, but claimed she did nothing to stop the irregularities.

Drilon did not offer any evidence or say whether Ms Arroyo profited from the alleged abnormalities. He said he made the allegations to play down speculation that his party abandoned Ms Arroyo as part of a deal to ensure a seat for himself in a post-Arroyo government.

In Malacañang, Northrail president Jose Cortez Jr. yesterday denied that the project was overpriced considering that it was a government-to-government project.

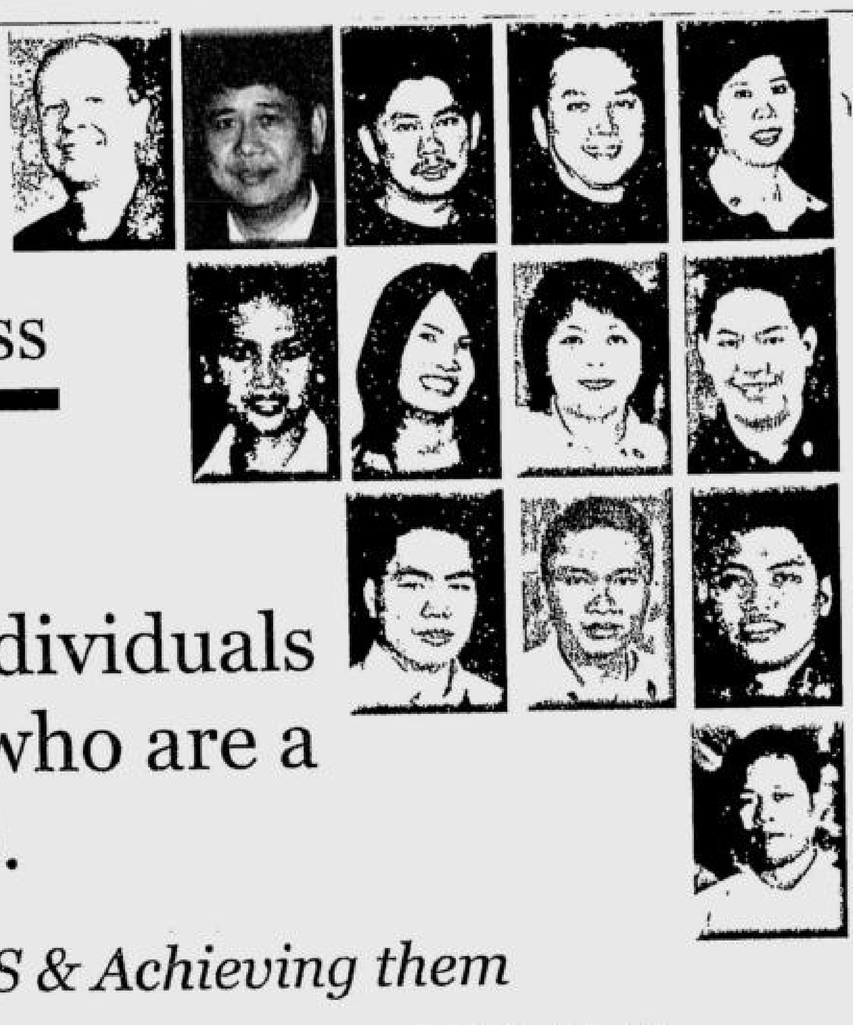
Cortez also noted that claims that Northrail costs nearly P1 billion per kilometer were inaccurate considering that they were building a double-track rail instead of single-track which would keep the cost per track at less than P400 million.

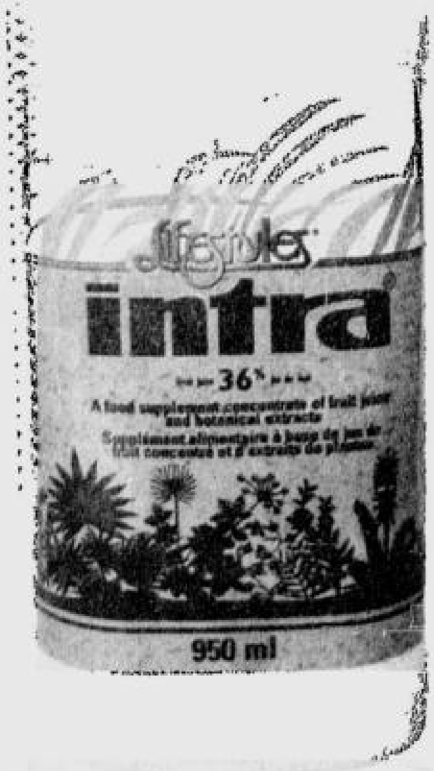
"Over the last few weeks, I have agonized over my support on the presidency in the face of what I know to be colossal corrupt deals in this government," Drilon said.

"I have tried to do my share in advising the president publicly and privately, but unfortunately nothing was happening and it reached a point when I had to make a decision," he said. "I reached the point where my conscience could no longer allow me to serve, to be part of government."

Ms Arroyo has been grappling with allegations that she rigged last year's election. She also has been hurt by accusations that her family received huge illegal gambling kickbacks. The allegations, the subject of congressional inquiries, have triggered her worst crisis and calls for her to step down.

AP, with report from Gil Cabacungan Jr.





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Cebu City

JULY 23
TACLOBAN
2:00-4:00 p.m.
Ritz Tower de Leyte,
Tacloban City
Leyte

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Lifestyles

US ENVOY'S LAMENT

RP still stuck on 'threshold of greatness'

By Volt Contreras

ALMOST two decades have passed and Filipinos are still stuck on the "threshold of greatness."

This was how US Embassy Charge d'Affaires Joseph Mussomeli expressed personal sadness over his host country that, in his view, should have moved far ahead following the dramatic ouster of dictator Ferdinand Marcos in 1986.

Mussomeli, who was assigned in Manila during the first people power uprising, recalled his thoughts at that time: "Now that (Filipinos) had gotten rid of Marcos, everything would go perfectly—politically, socially, economically."

He and his wife "really felt that the Philippines was on the threshold of greatness," the diplomat told GMA 7 in an interview last Friday in the course of giving Washington's view on the current political crisis.

"To see that they're still on that same threshold, that they haven't attained the economic power and prestige that they deserve, given the talent and the intelligence of the Filipino people, it's just amazing that they still are on that threshold," he noted.

"On a personal level, it's sad," added Mussomeli, who is leaving the Philippines in August for a new post in Cambodia.

Without making a categorical statement of support to President Macapagal-Arroyo, the American official maintained that Washington supports the democratic process and will "oppose" unconstitutional means of ending the crisis.

By unconstitutional, he raised three scenarios: a military coup, the imposition of martial law by the government, or "some sort of people power movement."

"I think all three would be disruptive to the long-term interests of the Philippines and so we would oppose them," he said.

Evangelical churches reject demands for GMA to resign

By Blanche S. Rivera

A COUNCIL composed of religious groups formed by President Macapagal-Arroyo to revive values formation in the government has found the President herself as the biggest issue it may confront in its quest to fulfill its mandate.

Members of the Presidential Council on Values created by Ms Arroyo last year have taken opposing stands on the question of whether the Chief Executive faces legal liability for talking with an election official and suggestions she was seeking to rig the elections in her favor.

The Philippine Council of Evangelical Churches, which has two representatives on the council, yesterday rejected calls for the President to resign, saying she should be given her day in court.

PCEC president Efraim Tendero said that like an ordinary Filipino accused of a crime, the President had a right to due process and should be presumed innocent until proven guilty.

"We cannot treat as absolute any political judgments… If we call for her resignation, that means we have already judged her when… we are not certain yet on her culpability," Tendero said in a press conference in Quezon City yesterday.

The PCEC claims a membership of 20 bishops and more than 500 pastors representing about five million members of Evangelical churches nationwide.

The PCEC's announcement followed the decision of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines to not ask the President to resign.

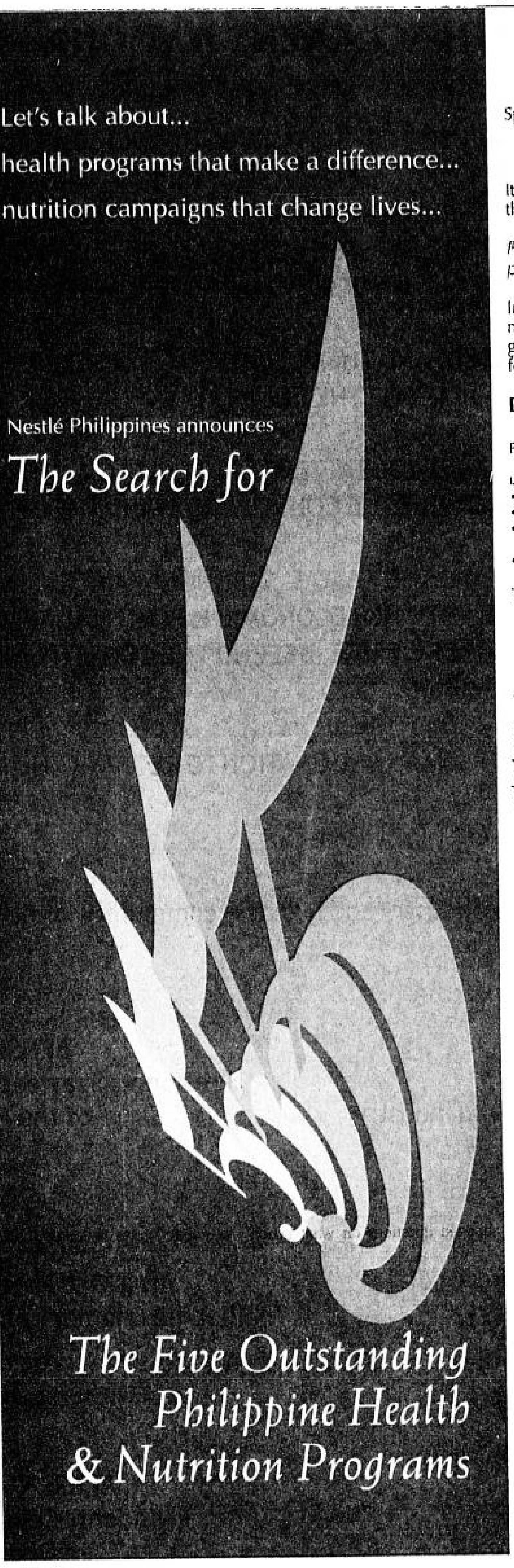
The CBCP also has one representative in the council, its outgoing president, Fernando Capalla, or his representative Imus Bishop Luis Tagle.

Another member, the National Council of Churches of the Philippines, had earlier called for Ms Arroyo's resignation.

Tendero said the council, which usually meets once a month, had not met the past two months.

The President is the chair of the council.

The council's vice chair, Education Secretary Florencio Abad, was among ten officials who left the Arroyo government last week and demanded the President's resignation.



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Deadline for submission is extended to August 15, 2005.

PROGRAM QUALIFICATIONS

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- Healthy Diet campaigns –programs following the 10 Nutritional Guidelines for Filipinos
- Fitness programs – programs supporting community health and physical fitness
- Nutrition Education Effectiveness programs– programs promoting increased health and nutrition awareness and/or the effectiveness of feeding programs
- Lifestyle Modifying programs – programs addressing overweight, obesity, diabetes, hypertension

To be eligible for nominations, these programs must:
(1) be initiated or managed by NGOs, LGUs, or Health Organizations at the barangay municipal, city or provincial level
(2) have shown significant results on the wellness of the community
(3) have been in operation for at least one year at the time of application

AWARDS CRITERIA

Programs will be judged on:
(1) Effectiveness – measurable results documented by facts and figures
(2) Project Impact – observable improvement made in community health and lifestyle
(3) People Participation – the number of participants involved
(4) Sustainability – the likelihood of the program inspiring other communities to adopt it
(5) Health and Wellness Concern – responsiveness to the health and nutrition needs of the community

Winning programs will be awarded February 2006

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Ms. Zenaida F. Velasco
Nutrition & Emotional Wellness Center
Unit 5 D2 Pearl Plaza Bldg., Pearl Drive
Ortigas Center, Pasig City
Tel no: 700 9558
Telefax: 637 6521
Cell Phone: 0917 8278505

North/Central Luzon
Ms. Imelda T. Aboy
DOH, Car BGH CPD
Baguio City
Tel no: (074) 442 8096
Telefax: (074) 442 8097
Cell Phone: 0917 506 9727
Email: imeldaaboy@yahoo.com
Residence: (074) 446 8827

South Luzon
Ms. Juliet C. Mabbayad
Provincial Health Office
J. De Leon St., Sta. Cruz,
Laguna
Tel no: (049) 808 1523
Cell Phone: 0919 349 2920
Email: anchordiet@yahoo.com
Residence: (049) 810 7693

Visayas
Ms. Lilia S. Teves
University of San Agustin
Iloilo City
Tel no: (033) 337 4841 to 44
Telefax: (033) 377 3403
Cell Phone: 0917 961 3546
Residence: (033) 509 3587

Mindanao
Ms. Remedios N. Montano
BSND Dept. Lourdes College
Archbishop Hayes Street
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STATEMENT OF THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY IN CEBU AND THE VISAYAS ON THE CURRENT NATIONAL ISSUE

WE STAND BY OUR POSITION SUPPORTING THE CONSTITUTIONAL PROCESS AND RULE OF LAW.

WE BELIEVE IN TRANSPARENCY AND THE RULE OF LAW IN ADMINISTERING SANCTIONS AND LEGAL PROCEEDINGS AGAINST INDIVIDUALS WHO HAVE VIOLATED THE IDEALS OF THE CONSTITUTION. EVERYONE SHOULD BE HELD ACCOUNTABLE FOR ANY WRONG DOING REGARDLESS OF STATURE IN THE SOCIETY AND GOVERNMENT AFTER DUE PROCESS.

WE ARE CALLING ON ALL POLITICAL LEADERS AND THE PUBLIC TO ACT IN SOBRIETY AND VIGILANCE IN CONSIDERATION OF THE NATIONAL INTEREST AND ECONOMIC STABILITY OF THE COUNTRY.

WE CONDEMN "THE HYPOCRITICAL AND OBNOXIOUS ATTEMPTS TO BULLY GMA INTO RESIGNING." WE DO NOT SUPPORT A QUICK-FIX-BAND-AID SOLUTION THAT WILL UNDERMINE THE CONSTITUTION AND THE INSTITUTION OF THE OFFICE OF THE PRESIDENT.

WE, THE BUSINESS COMMUNITY OF CEBU AND THE VISAYAS, STRONGLY MANIFEST OUR SUPPORT TO HER EXCELLENCY PRESIDENT GLORIA MACAPAGAL-ARROYO TOGETHER WITH HER ECONOMIC & POLITICAL REFORM AGENDA. **WE INSIST THAT P-GMA STAY AND CONTINUE TO DISCHARGE HER OATH OF OFFICE, DEFEND THE CONSTITUTION AND LEAD THE FILIPINO PEOPLE AS THE DULY ELECTED PRESIDENT OF THE REPUBLIC**.

WE ALSO APPEAL TO THOSE CALLING FOR P-GMA'S RESIGNATION TO **RETHINK** THEIR POSITION FOR THE GREATER GOOD OF ALL.

DONE THIS 9TH DAY OF JULY 2005, CEBU CITY PHILIPPINES.

For the Cebu Chamber of Commerce and Industry and business community in the Visayas:

ROBERT L. GO
President
Cebu Chamber of Commerce and Industry

BENSON DAKAY
President, Seaweed Industry Association
of the Philippines

ERIC MENDOZA
President, Mandaue Chamber of
Commerce and Industry

CARLOS G. CO
Area Vice President for Visayas
Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry

AUGUSTIN PALAO
President
Exporters Confederation, Inc.

ALICE K. QUEBLATIN
President, Cebu Association of Tour
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JAY YUVALLUS
President
Cebu Furniture Industries
Foundation

PAUL HUBAHIB
Coordinator
Cebu Multi-sectoral Group

JOSE T. NG
Regional Governor, Region 7
Philippine Chamber of
Commerce & Industry

KENNETH TAN
President, Financial Executives-Cebu

(Sgd) ROGER LO
President
Tacloban Chamber of Commerce
and Industry

ROBERTO L. MONTELIBANO
President
Metro Bacolod Chamber of
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(Sgd.) GUIDON DE LA CRUZ
Regional Governor, Region 6
Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry

JENNIFER CRUZ
President
Cebu GTH

(Sgd.) LUCIO ONG
President
Mandaue Filipino-Chinese Chamber
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(Sgd.) VIRGINIA M. LOCSON
President
Cebu Realtors Board

PAID ADVERTISMENT

Policemen warned vs mass leave

THE PHILIPPINE National Police yesterday warned its 115,000 members against joining a planned mass leave to support calls for the resignation of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

The PNP said "some individuals" have been egging on the policemen to go on leave in solidarity with groups seeking to oust Ms Arroyo.

They did not, however, identify who these "individuals" were.

Yesterday morning, Director General Arturo Lomibao met with top officials amid persistent reports of recruitment in the PNP and told them to remind their troops to stay neutral and strictly adhere to the chain of command.

"We are aware of the efforts of some individuals enticing members of the PNP to participate or support political moves calling for the resignation of the president," Lomibao said.

"I must emphasize again that the PNP will not take part in any political move, much less join any form of protest action against the administration," he said.

Admitting that officers on the ground are "vulnerable" to political persuasions, the PNP warned that policemen caught engaging in partisan politics face legal and administrative sanctions, including dismissal.

"Ours is not to intervene in such political exercises... That's why I said a while ago that whether you are pro or anti-government, our job is to maintain peace and order," he said. *Luige A. del Puerto*

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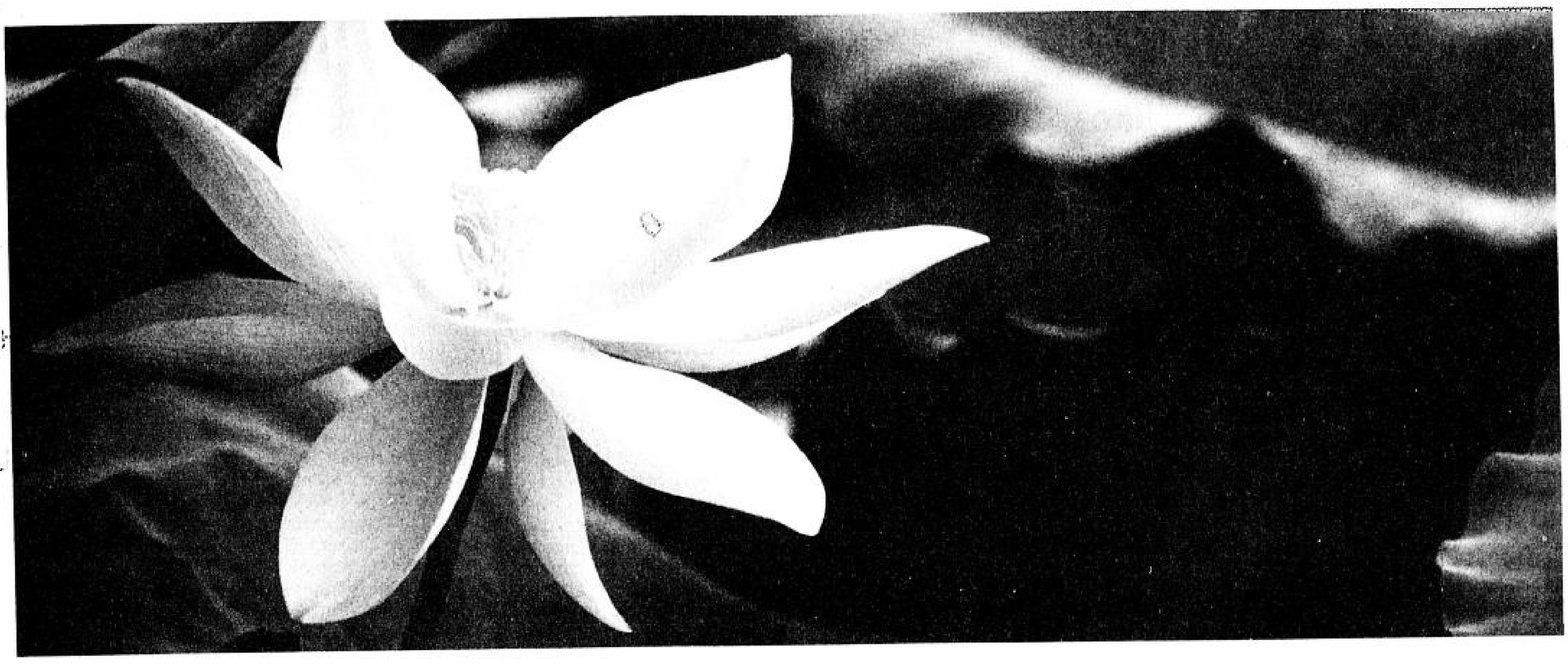

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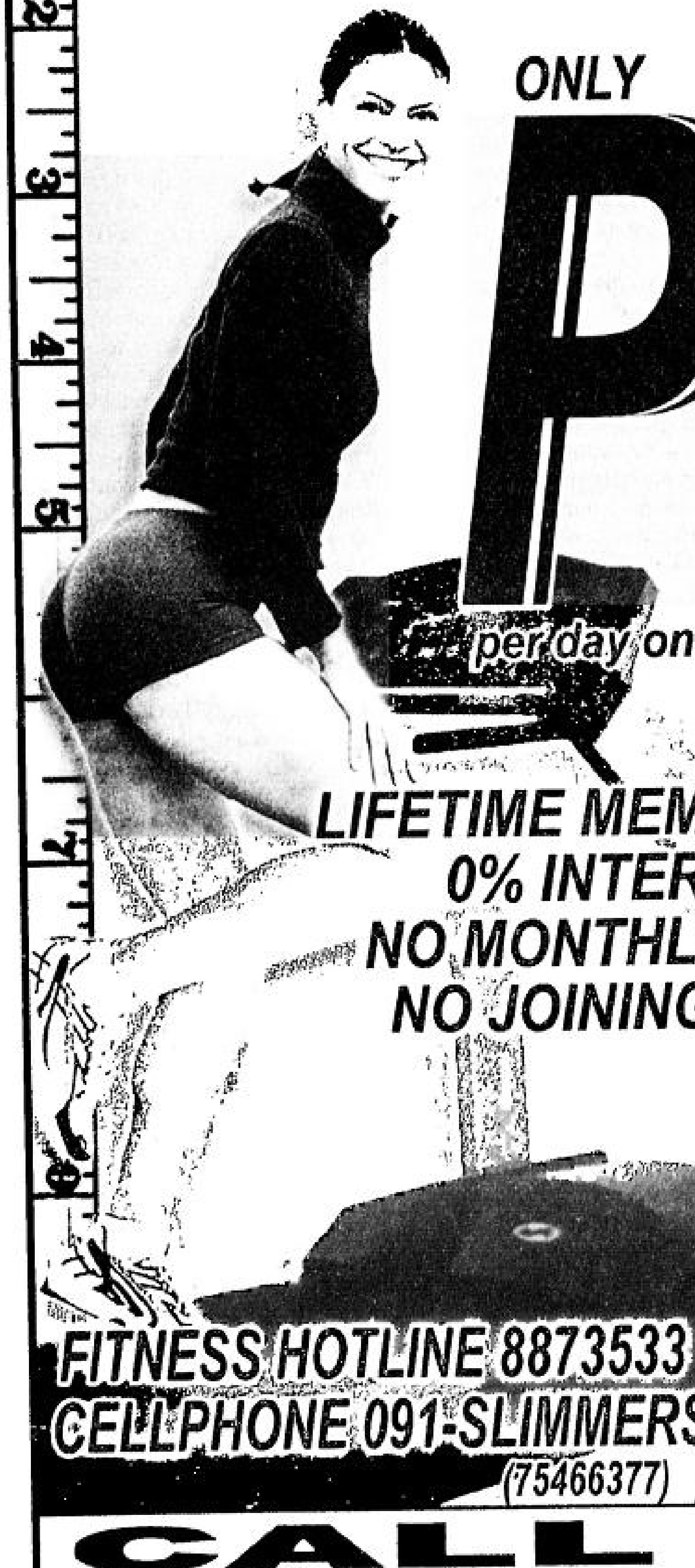

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Bishops' statement draws cheers, jeers

From page A1

ple for a protest tomorrow.

"At P100 per head, that will require the sum of P5 million. I doubt if after the CBCP statement, any group of political venture entrepreneurs will be willing to advance that much financial capital," Santiago said.

Sen. Juan Ponce Enrile said the CBCP had "greatly helped" ease the political tension by stepping back from its former activist position and opting to adopt a "very careful and cautious attitude" to the political controversy.

Deft handling

"By their deft handling of the issue, the bishops succeeded in avoiding a serious and unpleasant direct confrontation between the government and the Catholic Church," the opposition senator said.

"In effect, the position taken by the bishops altered the former political interventionist practice of the Catholic Church."

Sen. Rodolfo Biazon said the CBCP's position and the Liberal Party's stand "were almost parallel," but merely differed in language.

Senate President Franklin Drilon agreed, saying he felt happy upon reading the group's pronouncement because it mirrored the stand of the party.

"In fact, what the CBCP [members] said that while they're not calling for her resignation, it's clear that confidence in the presidency and institutions has been eroded and the President should examine the extent of her participation in the erosion of the credibility of those institutions," he said.

Twenty LP stalwarts, including Drilon, Biazon and Senate Majority Leader Francis Pangilinan, voted to adopt this position.

Opposition senators predicted Ms Arroyo would not survive the crisis despite the bishops' refusal to call for her resignation.

Finished

"Gloria is finished. It's only a matter of time," Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr. said.

"She's swirling in the eye of the storm and there is no rescuing her from the righteous wrath of a people betrayed," he added.

"It's still a question of when, not if, she would resign because there is no way out for her. I think she will be pressured eventually to resign," Sen. Panfilo Lacson said.

Sen. Sergio Osmeña III said Ms Arroyo could no longer regain the trust she lost.

"The additional lies and half-truths, including her fake confession, only make matters worse. As usual she is placing her personal interest ahead of the national interest," Osmeña said.

"The impeachment trial will merely prolong an agony that could have been avoided. The masses will bear the brunt of a deteriorating economy."

"I think the issues of credibility and legitimacy are really what's at the core here and until these are adequately addressed, there will be no peace and stability," Sen. Manuel Roxas II, also of the LP, said.

Continued turmoil

Roxas issued a statement denying he had called on the President to resign. "I have not reached that conclusion as yet. Our country will continue to be in turmoil, regardless of resignation, unless and until the fundamental questions of credibility and legitimacy are addressed."

Sen. Richard Gordon, who also belongs to the administration party, said it was hard to say if the President had weathered the crisis. "I don't know. I certainly hope so," he said.

Ms Arroyo is "certainly ahead now" although she has a broken wing, Gordon said.

Former Sen. Jovito Salonga said the CBCP position averted a rerun of people power revolts that ousted Presidents Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 and Joseph Estrada in 2001.

"Right now, the demonstrations are on and off and the weather has been very helpful to GMA," said Salonga.

Irresponsible

Manila Rep. Bienvenido Abante, president of the Bible Believers League for Morality and Democracy and chair of the Alliance of Baptist Councils board of advisers, said 20 bishops and more than 500 pastors of evangelical churches, representing five million members, had expressed support for Ms Arroyo.

Abante said the evangelical leaders felt that the "irresponsible" pursuit of power through extraconstitutional means was "slowly undoing the gains the country has obtained in the last few years."

But Cibac (Citizens' Battle Against Corruption) party-list Rep. Joel Villanueva, the son of Bro. Eddie Villanueva, leader of the Jesus is Lord Church, said the President's allies and Vice President Noli de Castro should advise Ms Arroyo to resign.

Villanueva said her resignation was the "fastest and most peaceful recourse" to end the current political crisis.

Priest-activist Robert Reyes accused the bishops of acting "like Gloria's apologists."

Reyes, who is fasting to pressure Ms Arroyo into resigning, said of the bishops' statement: "They should guide the flock, but they're just sowing more confusion."

Renato Reyes, secretary general of the leftist Bagong Alyansang Makabayan, said "Arroyo is digging in. We think the decisive factor would be for people to fill the streets in large numbers to force her out."

Director General Arturo Lomibao, Philippine National Police chief, said the command was glad that the CBCP shared "our view on the call for nonviolence and sobriety."

Ex-Sen. Francisco Tatad said the CBCP statement fell short of a previous position it took in 1986 in "Vox Populi, Vox Dei" when it said the Marcos government had lost the moral basis to govern.

Saturday's CBCP stand "simply shifted the burden from priests and bishops to laymen," said Tatad.

"We are not going to effect the change we seek by doing nothing by sheer apathy. If we did nothing, we would be party to our own destruction as a people. We would be jointly guilty with the perpetrators of the wrong we want righted," said the prelates in 1986. It "publicly defined the moral basis for Edsa I," according to Tatad, also chair of the nongovernment Citizens vs. Corruption Task Force.

Yesterday, Tatad "wished that the bishops had looked at the present crisis as primarily a problem of morality rather than of politics."

The bishops "might have seen (Ms Arroyo's) resignation as a moral solution to a grave moral problem," said Tatad. He said the CBCP's decision not to join calls for resignation was "not an expression of support for her and cannot possibly stop or stay what is imminent and inevitable."

"The crisis is worse than ever. She will fall. Official rumors to the contrary are misleading," Tatad said.

Ang Kapatiran—the platform-based Alliance for Common Good—also called on the President to resign or risk a violent grab for power by extremist groups.

In a statement issued by Kapatiran president Nandy Pacheco and secretary general Alexander Lacson, the newly formed political party warned the present political crisis was bringing the government to paralysis.

"The longer the President holds on to power, the graver is the danger that any armed and extremist group may take advantage of the political crisis. And if and when any such group strikes, the whole nation will surely be the biggest loser," the statement said.

It said "resignation is the ultimate act of self-sacrifice for the common good" and the succession by Vice President Noli de Castro "is the fastest, least destructive, most peaceful, and the least costly way to resolve our present crisis." *With reports from Gil C. Cabacungan Jr., Norman Bordadora, Blanche S. Rivera, Christine O. Avendaño, Jerry Esplanada, Luige A. del Puerto and Philip C. Tubeza*

How CBCP spoke in times of crises

IN TIMES of turmoil, the country's Roman Catholic bishops have made their collective voice heard by their flock.

They spoke out about a week before Ferdinand Marcos was overthrown in February 1986, in the turbulent months before Joseph Estrada was ousted in January 2001, and on Sunday as calls mounted for President Macapagal-Arroyo to resign.

Here's how the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) spoke during those critical periods:

- **Feb. 15, 1986** (After Marcos claimed victory in fraud-marred snap election): "In our considered judgment, the polls were unparalleled in the fraudulence of their conduct …

"According to moral principles, a government that assumes or retains power through fraudulent means has no moral basis. For such an access to power is tantamount to a forcible seizure and cannot command the allegiance of the citizenry. The most we can say then, about such a government, is that it is a government in possession of power. But admitting that, we hasten to add: Because of that very fact, that same government itself has the obligation to right the wrong it is founded on. It must respect the mandate of the people. This is precondition for any reconciliation."

- **Oct. 13, 2000** (After Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson revealed that he had delivered "jueteng" payoffs to Estrada):

"We should pray together, reflect together and act together to resolve the present problem resolutely and decisively by all the peaceful and legal means open to us, including presidential resignation if need be …

"This latest development … places the presidency in moral disarray … The many scandals that the President has reportedly gotten involved in since he assumed the presidency are morally reprehensible."

- **July 10, 2005** (Amid demands for Ms Arroyo to resign over allegations she was involved in electoral fraud and members of her family received gambling payoffs): " … We believe that no single concrete option regarding President Macapagal-Arroyo can claim to be the only one demanded by the Gospel. Therefore, in a spirit of humility and truth, we declare our prayerfully discerned collective decision that we do not demand her resignation. Yet neither do we encourage her simply to dismiss such a call from others. For we recognize that non-violent appeals for her resignation, the demand for a Truth Commission and the filing of an impeachment case are not against the Gospel …

"Punishment should also be imposed on those duly found guilty of corruption and illegal acts, such as jueteng and wiretapping."

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Statement of the National Capital Region Educators Forum of the National Situation
July 7, 2005

Reading the Signs of the Times is the theme of our Educators Forum here at the St. Scholastica's College, Manila today, the 7th of July 2005, the 113th Anniversary of the Founding of the Katipunan.

As our ancestors gathered to see how they would respond to the call of their times, so have we come to look at how we might address the cries of the people in ours. We are representatives of the member schools of the Catholic Educational Association of the Philippines (CEAP) in the National Capital Region, and of other Christian and private educational institutions in the city. We seek the guidance of the Holy Spirit and the advice of the experts in the field of law, morality, economics, politics and the social sciences so we may responsibly discuss and address the issues of the day.

President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo today is suspected and accused of having acted improperly – even cheated – in asking a Commission on Elections (COMELEC) official about election results prior to the eventual proclamation of her having won the presidency. After a period of silence, the President has admitted to a lapse of judgment in making such a call or calls, for they were improper, and has apologized. Some sectors of society have accepted the apology and have urged the nation to move on. Others say that the apology is unacceptable, that she has lost her moral ascendancy and should either resign or be impeached or simply just be removed from office.

While she has merely glided over the truth, we as educators daily fathom the impressionable minds of our children and youth. We realize the delicate journey we mutually embark. Off and inside the classroom, we try to enter into the learner's worldviews, understand their development processes and accompany them along the road of truth and justice.

Increasingly, our shared journey has become too difficult to take. Imparting moral values has become an uphill climb. Our young people need help. They seem to be powerless at the onslaught of today's consumeristic and narcissistic society. Many have been scarred by the culture of violence right at the sanctuary of their homes and communities; and many more are lost and frustrated that nothing definite awaits their future.

Written in their faces are questions that rend our hearts: Given this national crisis, is there a future to hope in? Are there principles to believe in, moral tenets to hang on, directions to pursue? What is right or wrong now?

What then do we, educators, say?

We agree with the Pastoral Statement of His Excellency Archbishop Gaudencio B. Rosales, D.D. which says or implies, among other things, that expressions of regret while acceptable should lead to expressions of accountability to be believable; that any move to address the situation be within the Philippine Constitution; that any proposed solution should not be violent; that our leaders should give hope, not promote despair among people; that they work to make concrete, immediate, and authentic reforms.

We look at the act of the President as more than just a lapse of judgment or an impropriety. We believe it is wrong. Consequently, as educators, we cannot but focus on the moral issue that surrounds her apology. What she has done is not plain and simple inappropriateness, much less a strategic miscalculation in the world of politics. In short, what she did maybe – from her vantage point – a "lapse of judgement" but it **is morally wrong.**

For although as she said was only anxious to protect her votes, the fact of calling the COMELEC official may have been interpreted as an act that implied a wish to ensure a victory. That an intention to cheat was present or actual cheating was ordered is really beyond supposed evidence. That she did not really win the elections also cannot be concluded. We focus merely on the fact, and that, we say, was wrong, even if others did the same. What others did was also wrong.

Whether now, because of this, the President should leave her office, we do not say. We say rather:

> *"Madame President, on the matter of resignation, we leave it to you to decide. We ask you to ask yourself whether – knowing yourself, your capacity to govern and the legitimacy of your office as declared By the Supreme Court but also hearing the cries of some people that you resign because you have lost moral ascendancy – 'should I carry on or should I let go.'*
>
> *Should you decide to stay, we say that the impeachment process which has been initiated be allowed to take its full course. We also expect that concrete and radical reforms be initiated by your office such that the problems of the people, especially the poor, be immediately addressed.*
>
> *We pray that we, our leaders, and the entire Filipino nation all be guided by God in our decisions and we all listen to God" promptings in our moves."*

"In the world you will have strife, but do not be afraid, I have conquered the world".John 16,33

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Pope's hand seen . . .

From page A1

"We are not politicians … With Pope Benedict XVI we do not believe in the 'intrusion into politics on the part of the hierarchy'."

A Church source denied suggestions that the Vatican had a hand in the CBCP position, or worse, that it reprimanded bishops for seemingly being "too political." He said "the Vatican would never do anything like that."

Cruz described the nuncio's tone as "very calm, very pastoral" throughout his speech that lasted no more than 10 minutes. "It was similar to the way elders remind kids that there are things they shouldn't do," he said.

Newsbreak, a weekly newsmagazine, quoted two unidentified bishops as saying the papal nuncio told the bishops that the Vatican was monitoring how the local church was behaving in the crisis, and was displeased over too much political interference by the local clergy.

Franco said bishops were "out of their place when they get into direct action, attending rallies on political issues, siding with one group or another, being used by parties with hidden agendas for the purpose of grabbing power," Newsbreak reported.

Before the retreat, three of the bishops had publicly demanded that Ms Arroyo resign over allegations she cheated in last year's election. The resulting CBCP statement supported constitutional ways of resolving the impasse and averted a potentially tragic end to the four-year-old Arroyo administration.

Any call by the influential bishops for Ms Arroyo to step down would have sealed her fate, analysts said.

The Church played a key role in the "people power" revolt that ousted the corruption-tainted Joseph Estrada and swept Ms Arroyo to power in 2001.

It was also instrumental in organizing massive protests which drove the dictator Ferdinand Marcos into exile in Hawaii in 1986.

Cruz noted that the papal nuncio had been issuing "reminders" when the Filipino bishops deliberated on sensitive issues since the Estrada regime.

Consensus

But Cruz said when Franco appeared at the gathering, the bishops had already agreed to stay away from calls on Ms Arroyo to stand down.

The bishops earlier on Thursday sought an assurance from the military that it would not intervene in the controversy, but Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu was unable to meet with them because of a tight schedule, his spokesperson said.

However, Abu sent his statement to the troops to remain "apolitical."

"A consensus was always there," said outgoing CBCP president Fernando Capalla, dismissing widespread speculation that the hierarchy was deeply divided. He said what delayed the issuance of the statement was its "precise formulation."

"We are not kingmakers," said Nueva Caceres Archbishop Leonardo Legaspi, one of the two prelates who penned the CBCP statement. "We think that entering into the area of either saying resign or not resign was entering the political arena." *With a report from Dona Pazzibugan and AFP*

Gamblers try to cash in on GMA fate

THE FATE of embattled President Macapagal-Arroyo has meant unusually brisk business for the country's underground bookmakers.

Filipinos, often fond of a wager, have rushed to place bets on how long Arroyo will continue to stay in office and who might replace her as she faces mounting calls to resign over allegations of election cheating and corruption by members of her family.

"It seems my chance of winning this time is slim," said one stockbroker who wagered P10,000 that Ms Arroyo would survive the toughest crisis of her four-year presidency.

Vice President Noli de Castro appears to be the favorite as Ms Arroyo's successor, followed by deposed president Joseph Estrada, Sen. Panfilo Lacson and actress Susan Roces, widow of Ms Arroyo's strongest election challenger last year.

Roving bookmakers hang around state-run casinos throughout Manila and illegal mahjong parlors in Binondo, the capital's Chinatown district, working by mobile phone and word of mouth but usually taking bets only from people they know.

The stockbroker said he had heard of wagers of up to P80,000 on whether the President would hang on until the end of the year or be removed by a popular revolt or military intervention.

Filipinos bet heavily on the results of basketball games and cockfights, but also wager informally on things like the victor in a fight between two spiders placed on a stick.

Games of chance are the most popular shows on daytime television. One called "Wowowee" gives away houses and cash prizes of as much as P1 million to winning contestants.

Reuters

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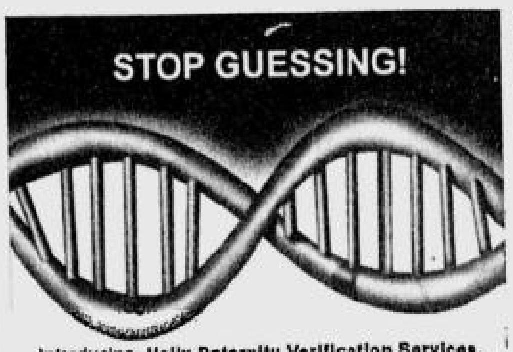

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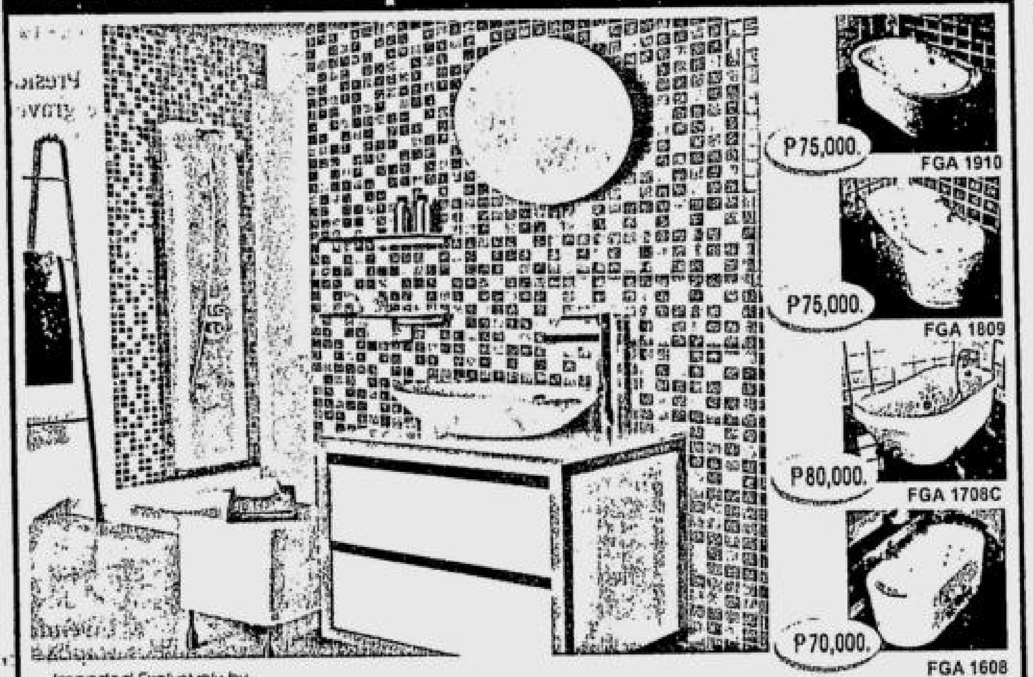

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Cebu men's club stands firm on vasectomy

From page A1

cy—and it has nothing to do with keeping the beleaguered President in power.

Cebu has launched a campaign to persuade fathers around the country to undergo vasectomy, a nonsurgical procedure that will prevent them from siring children.

It was in Cebu where what the Cebuanos believe to be the country's first organization of vasectomized men was set up in April, dubbed the Bisayang Maginoo Club.

Members are now recruiting more men into their fold to curb the Philippines' fast-growing population.

The BMC has 130 members and is set to launch an education and information campaign among Cebuano husbands through their testimony and rave reviews from their happy wives.

"It does not remove your pride as a man ... It actually helps you enjoy better sex because you're no longer nervous that you will get your wife pregnant," BMC secretary Ramonito Gallegos said.

Sex anytime

Gallegos, who has three children, said he underwent vasectomy out of love for his wife, who would have to undergo an operation if the couple opted for tubal ligation for the woman.

"It only takes 10 minutes, and you're up and about again ... unlike ligation, which will pain your wife for months," he said.

Leslie Camacho, 27, said she was mocked for months by her male neighbor after her husband underwent vasectomy.

"He said vasectomized men could no longer have an erection, but that's not true ... It's even better now. I never refuse my husband when he wants to have sex. We can do it anytime because I know I will not get pregnant," she said.

No sissies

Gallegos, Camacho and about 30 other vasectomized husbands and their wives were presented before the media at the Baking Medical Center on Saturday to promote the education campaign.

Saleshes Baking and her husband Alfredo, also a doctor, do free vasectomy as part of their personal campaign to promote family planning and help alleviate poverty in the province.

"We're vasectomized and we're not sissies. That's our advocacy now. That's how they bring clients to us," Baking said.

First ejaculations

She said her colleagues in Metro Manila often asked her how she convinced the Cebuano men to undergo vasectomy, perceived by most men to be against the Filipino's macho culture.

"When they know the benefits from those who've had it, their misconceptions are corrected and they volunteer, too," Baking said.

Acceptors, however, must strictly follow the doctor's advice or risk getting their wives pregnant—they must wear condoms for their first 20 ejaculations as they would still release sperms left in their reproductive system before the vasectomy.

Rave among women

On Olango island off Lapu-Lapu City, tubal ligation is the rave among the women, many of whom started childbearing between 16 and 20 years old.

Barangay health workers say 20 to 30 women undergo ligation every quarter, some against their husbands' wishes.

"The men here do not want to undergo vasectomy because they think it will prevent them from having an erection ... Some also do not want their wives to undergo ligation because they need them to work as well, and the procedure would compel them to rest for a few weeks," health worker Maribel said.

The population of the island, which comprises 11 villages, has increased from 23,000 to 26,000 in only two years. Its population growth rate of 3.4 percent is higher than the national rate of 2.36 percent.

IS A REVOLUTIONARY TRANSITIONAL GOVERNMENT CONSTITUTIONAL?

By Atty. Francisco I. Chavez

THE CONSTITUTION states that the President shall be elected by direct vote of the people. Meanwhile, the constitutional ways by which a vacancy is created, namely: death, permanent disability, resignation, and impeachment proceed on the assumption that the sitting President has been legitimately elected. When a President's fraudulent "election" into office is in fact the very basis for removal, none of those modes come into play.

Under this scenario, when a transitional power fills the void to remedy the systemic violation of the Constitution, it does not act under an unconstitutional authority because the Constitution it self provides for this.

It must be emphasized that the fundamental law, the very Constitution which is to be upheld, was itself a progeny of a Revolutionary Government.

Although there is debate as to whether or not the Edsa Revolution was indeed a revolution in the strict sense, it is without doubt that the Aquino Government assumed power through means which were not expressly provided by - and even contrary to - the 1973 Constitution (the constitution effective at that time). In other words, the Aquino Government was placed into power by "extra-constitutional" means. And through extra-constitutional means, the present Constitution was crafted and eventually ratified

The legitimacy of the Aquino goverment and necessarily, the 1987 Constitution has thus been established. In 1986, the Supreme Court, in ruling that the question of legitimacy of the Aquino Government was political in nature and cannot be reviewed by the said Court, stated that the Aquino Government was the result of a successful revolution. The Supreme Court further held that revolution is "AN INHERENT RIGHT OF THE PEOPLE to cast out their rulers, change their policy or effect radical reforms in their system of government or institutions by force or a general uprising when the legal and constitutional methods of making change have proved inadequate or are so obstructed as to be unavailable." The Supreme Court also ruled that "the focus of positive lawmaking power lies with the people of the state and from there is derived the right of the people to abolish, to reform and to alter any existing constitution". On the basis of this theory, the Supreme Court ruled that the Aquino Government and, necessarily, the 1987 Constitution are legitimate and not unconstitutional.

Thus, there is more than enough basis to hold that extra-constitutional is not necessarily unconstitutional. The 1987 Constitutional itself – the Constitution which the people seek to uphold – is proof of this settled fact.

That a revolutionary goverment is not necessarily unconstitutional finds basis in the Constitution itself. According to Section 1, Article II of the 1987 Constitution. "The Philippines is a democratic and republican State. Sovereignty resides in the people and all government authority emanates from them."

The quoted provision clearly recognizes the right of the people to stage a revolution, albeit implicitly. Since sovereignty resides in the people the people should be able to overthrow any government whom they have lost faith in. Since government authority resides in the people, no government can continue to function if the people express lack of belief and trust in it. When the people revolt and demand a change in government, their action cannot be deemed unconstitutional. The people would be merely exercising their right of sovereignty in withdrawing that authority which they delegated to their leaders. When they do, the act of dislodging their leaders in government is not in violation of the Constitution but is in fact a cathartic act of upholding the purity and majesty of the Constitution which had been defiled, debased and desecrated by their leaders.

If the revolutionaries, on the other hand, in attempting to seize power disregard the Constitution, succeed in their revolt and promulgate a "new" Constitution of their own making, it can be said that the old Constitution "has been inflicted a mortal wound" which "not only frees its successful slayers from its restraints but entitles them to judicial recognition as being legitimate and, therefore, to legal immunity with respect to their revolutionary acts." This is what happened during the EDSA 1 "people power" revolution. And this can likewise serve as the template for any direct action of the people to free themselves from the bondage of their failed, corrupt and dishonest leaders in government.

Yes, people should know that a revolutionary transitional government is not unconstitutional.

PAID ADVERTISEMENT

GMA eyes constituent assembly

From page A1

biggest party in the House of Representatives with at least 112 members.

Even so, the Ramos proposal is expected to meet strong opposition not only from Ms Arroyo's political opponents but also from her allies. Administration Sen. Miriam Defensor-Santiago, for instance, said that the proposal of Ramos was aimed at setting the stage for his return to power under a parliamentary form of government.

Ms Arroyo earlier this year said she planned to call a constitutional convention next year. Amid mounting calls for Ms Arroyo to resign, however, Ramos on Friday proposed that the President immediately convene Congress into a constituent assembly.

Under the Ramos proposal, Ms Arroyo would form a seven-member "high commission" to draw up proposed constitutional amendments, including a shift to a parliamentary setup. Congress would then debate and vote on these amendments, submit these to the people in a plebiscite by February next year, and call for parliamentary elections in May.

"The President has not made any specific comments on the manner (for Charter change), but we have been receiving a lot of comments and most of these proposals seem to favor Con-ass (constituent assembly)," Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said.

Albay Rep. Joey Salceda, the President's adviser on economic affairs, said he had learned during a recent meeting of top Lakas officers that Ms Arroyo "is now more receptive to the idea of a constitutional assembly."

In a speech on Thursday when she rejected calls for her to resign and and purge her Cabinet, Ms Arroyo cited the need for constitutional reforms to break the periodic impasse in the current political system.

"What I intend to do is work with legislators and civil groups who believe that changes in the fundamental law of the land are necessary in order to confront such basic issues as federalism, the character of our legislative process, reducing red tape in government processes, running for public office under a true party system and with less need to raise campaign funds, modernizing the economic provisions of our Constitution," she had said.

Bunye, however, said Ms Arroyo would tackle specific constitutional reforms suggested by Ramos only after the political crisis had passed.

"As soon as things are very much in control, we are willing to sit down and discuss the proposals but there is no timetable yet," he said.

Ms Arroyo appears to be laying the groundwork for Charter change by consolidating her forces at the House of Representatives.

Salceda said Ms Arroyo made a phone call to Kampi president Rep. Ronaldo Puno on Saturday to facilitate her proposal to merge Kampi with Lakas. Kampi will have a general meeting today in Quezon City to discuss the merger.

Objections

Santiago, however, voiced suspicions about the proposal of Ramos after he denied reports he was the de facto president. In a surprise move on Friday, Ramos said Ms Arroyo need not resign but added she had to institute immediate political reforms. Analysts said Ramos' move boosted Ms Arroyo's survival.

"Mr. Ramos reportedly resents being called a kingmaker. That's because he wants to be the king himself," Santiago said in a statement.

"Contrary to his feigned protestations, he (Ramos) is advocating a parliamentary system because he thinks that he could win as prime minister. [But] he would have to contend with Jose de Venecia and (tycoon) Eduardo Cojuangco," the administration senator added.

"In effect, Mr. Ramos purports to be President Arroyo's ally, but the real reason is that he is unacceptable to the opposition so he has no choice if he wants to remain a player. In effect, he is advocating that President Arroyo should step down not today, but next year. Thus, he is merely putting the problem on hold until he is good and ready to seize power again."

Santiago, who lost to Ramos in the bitterly contested 1992 presidential election, said changing the Constitution was not the solution to the present crisis.

"That is pathetic. In times of national crisis, the Constitution should be the solution. The Constitution should not be part of the problem, which is what will happen if we follow the Ramos scenario," she said.

Administration Sen. Richard Gordon, chair of the Senate committee on constitutional amendments, also rejected Ramos' proposal for a shift to a parliamentary form of government by May next year.

"I don't believe in knee-jerk constitutions, like the Cory Constitution. We don't change people by changing their suits," Gordon said.

"We do not make constitutions for graceful exits. We draft constitutions for all time and for the people," he added.

He said people were likely to think of a "personal agenda" behind Ramos' proposal.

Gordon said he would seek a "sequential change" in the Constitution to strengthen the political party system and make government more responsive to the needs of the different regions.

He said specific amendments could be tackled by Congress sitting as a constituent assembly to prohibit party-switching, make elections less often and set up regional councils composed of governors and congressmen.

Senate Minority Leader Aquilino Pimentel Jr., a staunch advocate of federalism, earlier rejected Charter changes proposed by Ramos. He said a Charter change should not be made just to solve Ms Arroyo's problem.

> 'That is pathetic. In times of national crisis, the Constitution should be the solution, not part of the problem,' says Miriam

THE DAILY GOSPEL

Tuesday, July 12, 2005
15th Week in Ordinary Time

1st Reading:	**Ex 2:1-15**
Gospel:	**Matthew 11:20-24**

Jesus began to denounce the cities in which he had performed most of his miracles, because the people there did not change their ways, "Alas for you Chorazin and Bethsaida! If the miracles worked in you had taken place in Tyre and Sidon, the people there would have repented long ago in sackcloth and ashes. But I assure you, for Tyre and Sidon it will be more bearable on the day of judgment than for you. And you, Capernaum, will you be lifted up to heaven? You will be thrown down to the place of the dead! For if the miracles which were performed in you had taken place in Sodom, it would still be there today! But I tell you, it will be more bearable for Sodom on the day of judgment than for you."

Commentary

Jesus acts as the prophet he is: denouncing the cities for their refusal to be converted even when he has done marvelous things in their midst for them to see and take heart from. He compares them to the ancient cities of sin that were cursed by the prophets. He goes after the cities where there are schools of learning and theology though they do not practice and turn to the Gospel. And Capernaum where he settled after being rejected in Nazareth he compares to Sodom, destroyed in Genesis. How would Jesus judge our cities: Manila, New York, London, Mexico City, Tokyo, Jakarta, Nairobi, Lima... how would we fare as those who have heard the Gospel yet do we repent and take God's word to heart?

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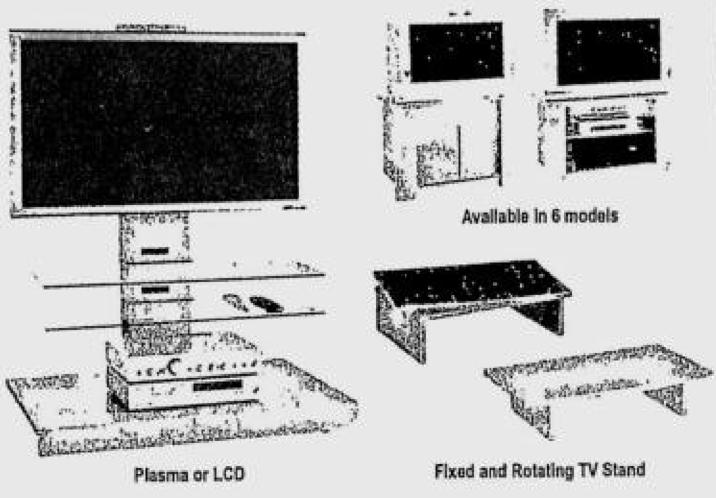

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A CALL FOR THE RULE OF LAW

A Statement from Officers of Kalayaan College

At a time when we as a people should be getting together and uniting to find solutions to problems that threaten to wreak havoc on our economy and inflict misery on the lives of our people (rising oil prices, terrorism, turbulent world economy), some of our countrymen are dividing us over partisan issues that are better resolved according to our Constitution and laws.

At this critical stage in our national development, we are giving our full support to President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, who we believe is the duly elected president of our country, and asking her not to resign but to remain steadfast in her determination to continue her program of government for the sake of this and future generations of Filipinos. Our country needs her reform measures, including the VAT and anti-corruption checks, to overcome problems of the immediate term and especially her initiatives in constitutional reform and the promotion of investment, employment and higher incomes to accelerate our long-term social, economic and political development.

We urge our countrymen to stand by the rule of law and give President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo their physical and moral support.

Jose V. Abueva, Ph.D.
President, Kalayaan College and U.P. Professor Emeritus of Public Administration and Political Science

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The WORLD

Editor **Luverne B. Gueco**

Defiant Londoners return to business

LONDON—Millions of defiant Londoners returned to work on Monday to hammer home the message: "It's business as usual" after last week's train and bus bombs killed at least 49 people.

"The Tube is up and running," said a spokesperson for the London Underground railway which carries three million passengers a day.

Buses, which transport six million people a day, were operating a near normal service.

Government worker Pam Bramidge said she had deliberately chosen to sit upstairs on a No. 30, on the same route as the bus which had its roof blown off last Thursday.

She said she was not surprised by Londoners' defiance, which was also recalled at celebrations on Sunday to mark the 60th anniversary of the end of World War II.

"It's what I would have expected really, particularly after the celebrations yesterday," she said on the bus. "I think there's a spirit."

Police urged commuters to go to work as normal.

"London is open for business. If we don't do that, then the terrorists will have won and that's not what we want," said Deputy Chief Constable Andy Trotter.

Police hunting the suspected al-Qaida bombers who targeted three underground trains and a double-decker bus last Thursday, have warned that the forensic search for clues is a painstaking process that could take time.

Relatives of those still missing after the attacks kept up a desperate search for information. Walls close to King's Cross station, scene of the worst blast, were covered with photographs of missing people and appeals for news of them.

Interior Minister Charles Clarke said Britons would inevitably be on edge until the bombers are caught.

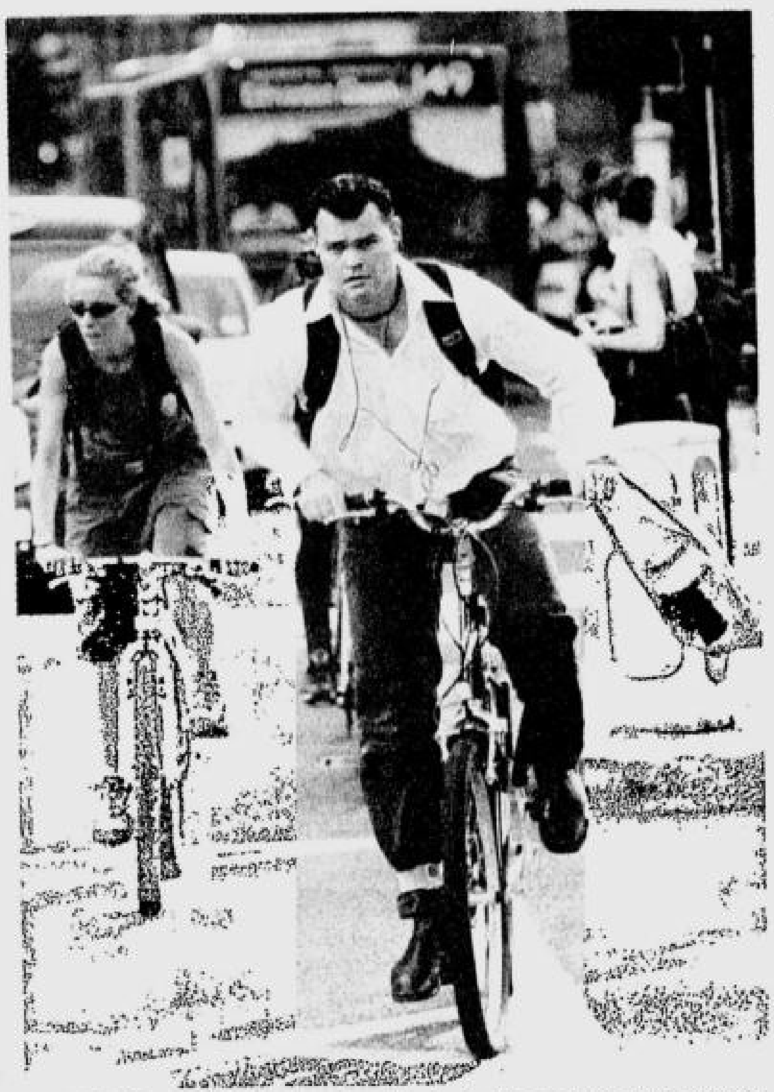
"The most important thing is to find the people who committed the attacks. Once that happens, people will feel they are more certain in where they are," he said.

"Our fear is, of course, of more attacks until we succeed in tracking down the gang that committed the atrocities on Thursday."

The United States has sent FBI forensic experts to help British police analyze the crime scene, which British and American authorities say bears the hallmarks of the al-Qaida network that attacked the United States on Sept. 11, 2001.

"I think we are proceeding on the assumption that the bombers are still at large and of course that adds a special urgency to figuring out who's done this," said US Homeland Security Secretary Michael Chertoff.

Security analysts said the bombers, if cornered, could be deadly. *Reuters*



WORKING people cycle into the city during the morning rush hour in London, July 11. Police urged Londoners to get back to work on Monday to show the suspected al-Qaida bombers who killed at least 49 people on July 7 that they had not cowed the British capital into submission. REUTERS

Luxembourg votes in favor of EU charter

LUXEMBOURG—Luxembourg gave a breath of air to the European Union's gasping constitution on Sunday by voting in favor of the moribund treaty at the center of the EU's political turmoil.

The result marks a victory for Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker, who had promised to stand down if voters rejected the constitution, which he promoted tirelessly during Luxembourg's recently ended EU presidency.

But the future of the text is in doubt since it was voted down by French and Dutch voters just over a month ago, plunging the 25-nation EU into anguished debate over Europe's future direction.

However, Luxembourg Prime Minister Jean-Claude Juncker seized on the opportunity to insist that the treaty was still alive, although he acknowledged that in order to revive it either France and the Netherlands would have to vote again or it would have to be renegotiated.

"The message that has come out and which is addressed to Europe and the world is that the constitution is not dead after the votes in France and the Netherlands," he said in a first public reaction.

Support for the constitution in this traditionally staunchly pro-EU country had slid recently, notably after the French and Dutch votes, building suspense about the outcome before the referendum.

Even Juncker admitted he was surprised the "yes" vote had done as well as it did.

But definitive results showed that 56.52 percent of voters backed the treaty and 43.48 percent rejected it, making Luxembourg the 13th EU country—just over half—to approve it.

"I was expecting a closer result," Juncker said.

Juncker, who after 11 years in power is Europe's longest serving head of government, expressed relief that the wager he had made, staking his job on the outcome of the vote, had paid off.

"This evening I am happy to be Luxembourg's prime minister and to remain so," he told a news conference. *AFP*

Barrier to cut off 55,000 Palestinians from Jerusalem

JERUSALEM—Around a quarter of the Palestinian population of Jerusalem face being cut off from the rest of the holy city after Israel's Cabinet approved a new route for its controversial West Bank barrier Sunday.

As Palestinians accused Israel of trying to seal the fate of occupied east Jerusalem, Deputy Prime Minister Ehud Olmert said the Gaza withdrawal plan should last no more than two weeks.

The revised barrier route will mean some 55,000 residents of east Jerusalem, which was captured and annexed by Israel in 1967, will no longer be able to travel freely throughout the holy city. Around 230,000 Palestinians live in the city.

It will now cut through the Palestinian neighborhoods of Shuafat and Akab as well as the Qalandiya refugee camp on the outskirts of the city.

Olmert insisted that citizens who found themselves outside the route of the barrier would not lose access to services.

"They will continue to be the beneficiaries of the social and municipal services which they are entitled to as holders of residency cards," Olmert said, adding that building work around Jerusalem should finish in September.

Construction has slowed down in the Jerusalem area following recent rulings by the Israeli supreme court which said the fundamental rights of some civilians were being infringed. *AFP*

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Rove leaked name of US spy to media–Newsweek

WASHINGTON—Top White House advisor Karl Rove was one of the secret sources that spoke to reporters about a covert CIA operative whose identity was leaked to the media, Newsweek magazine reported in its latest edition.

The magazine said Rove's lawyer, Robert Luskin, confirmed that Rove talked to Time magazine about former Ambassador Joseph Wilson and his wife, CIA agent Valerie Plame.

Luskin said Rove recently gave Time magazine reporter Matt Cooper permission to testify about the conversation to a grand jury investigating the leak in 2003, according to Newsweek.

A US federal judge ordered Cooper, along with New York Times reporter Judith Miller, to testify and reveal their confidential sources.

Last week Cooper avoided a jail sentence for contempt of court by agreeing to testify in the case. Miller refused to testify and was jailed.

The case has become an important test involving freedom of the press, pitting the media's traditional use of anonymous sources against the efforts of a federal government prosecutor to investigate a possible crime.

REUTERS
BUSH top aide Rove

It is illegal to knowingly reveal the identity of an undercover CIA agent.

Although Rove has made statements about the Plame leak, he has never publicly acknowledged talking to any reporter about the CIA agent.

Rove has carefully chosen his words when questioned about the leak. "I didn't know her name. I didn't leak her name," he told CNN last year when asked if he had had anything to do with it.

Special prosecutor Patrick Fitzgerald has been leading a two-year investigation into the leak amid questions about whether it came from White House as part of an attempt to discredit Wilson after he contradicted President George W. Bush's assertions about Iraq's weapons of mass destruction.

Wilson wrote an op-ed column in The New York Times saying he had been sent by the CIA in 2002 to investigate the Bush administration's claim that Iraq was trying to buy uranium from Africa— a claim that the administration used to justify going to war in Iraq. Wilson said he found no evidence to support the claim.

The Newsweek article said an e-mail Cooper sent his bureau chief after briefly talking with Rove stated that "it was, KR said, Wilson's wife, who apparently works at the agency on wmd (weapons of mass destruction) issues who authorized the trip."

The e-mail did not suggest that Rove used Plame's name or that he knew she was a covert agent, the article said.

"Karl Rove has shared with Fitzgerald all the information he has about any potentially relevant contacts he has had with any reporters, including Matt Cooper," Luskin told Newsweek.

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PRINCE ALBERT AP

Prince Albert, after owning love child, to wear crown

MONACO—Prince Albert II of Monaco was due to be formally enthroned Tuesday as ruler of the Mediterranean statelet in a move court officials hope will end a turbulent period for the 700-year-old Grimaldi dynasty.

Albert's father, the veteran prince Rainier who was best known to the world for his marriage to the American film star Grace Kelly, died in April.

The official mourning period was not yet over before Monaco was back at the center of media attention when a French-Togolese former air hostess claimed that Albert had fathered her now 22-month-old son.

Illegitimate children are nothing new in the Grimaldi clan, with Albert's sister Stephanie having three children out of wedlock.

But Albert, a confirmed 47-year-old bachelor, has been notoriously protective of his private life and despite alleged dalliances with a string of world-famous models and actresses, has rarely spoken publicly of his love life.

The shock was thus all the greater last Wednesday, the last day of official mourning for Rainier, when Albert, who is estimated to have a fortune worth some two billion euros, confirmed that he was indeed the father.

His son, Alexandre Coste, cannot become ruler of the principality under current succession laws but will be able to claim a financial inheritance, the prince's lawyer said.

Nicole Coste, who has two children from a former marriage, said she began a five-year relationship with Albert after meeting him on an Air France flight in 1997. The 33-year-old became pregnant with Alexandre in December 2002.

The affair marked another remarkable chapter in the history of Monaco, a country no bigger than New York's Central Park which has become indelibly linked with Hollywood glamour and jet-set wealth.

Tuesday's investiture ceremonies—a formality given that Albert became the legal ruler of Monaco while Prince Rainier was on his deathbed—were due to begin with a Catholic Mass in the principality's cathedral.

In the evening, the mayor of Monaco will symbolically hand over the keys of the town to Albert, following which the prince will make a formal speech during a reception for residents of the principality in his hill-top palace.

It has been reported that 22-month-old Alexandre and his mother Nicole Coste have not been invited to Tuesday's ceremonies.

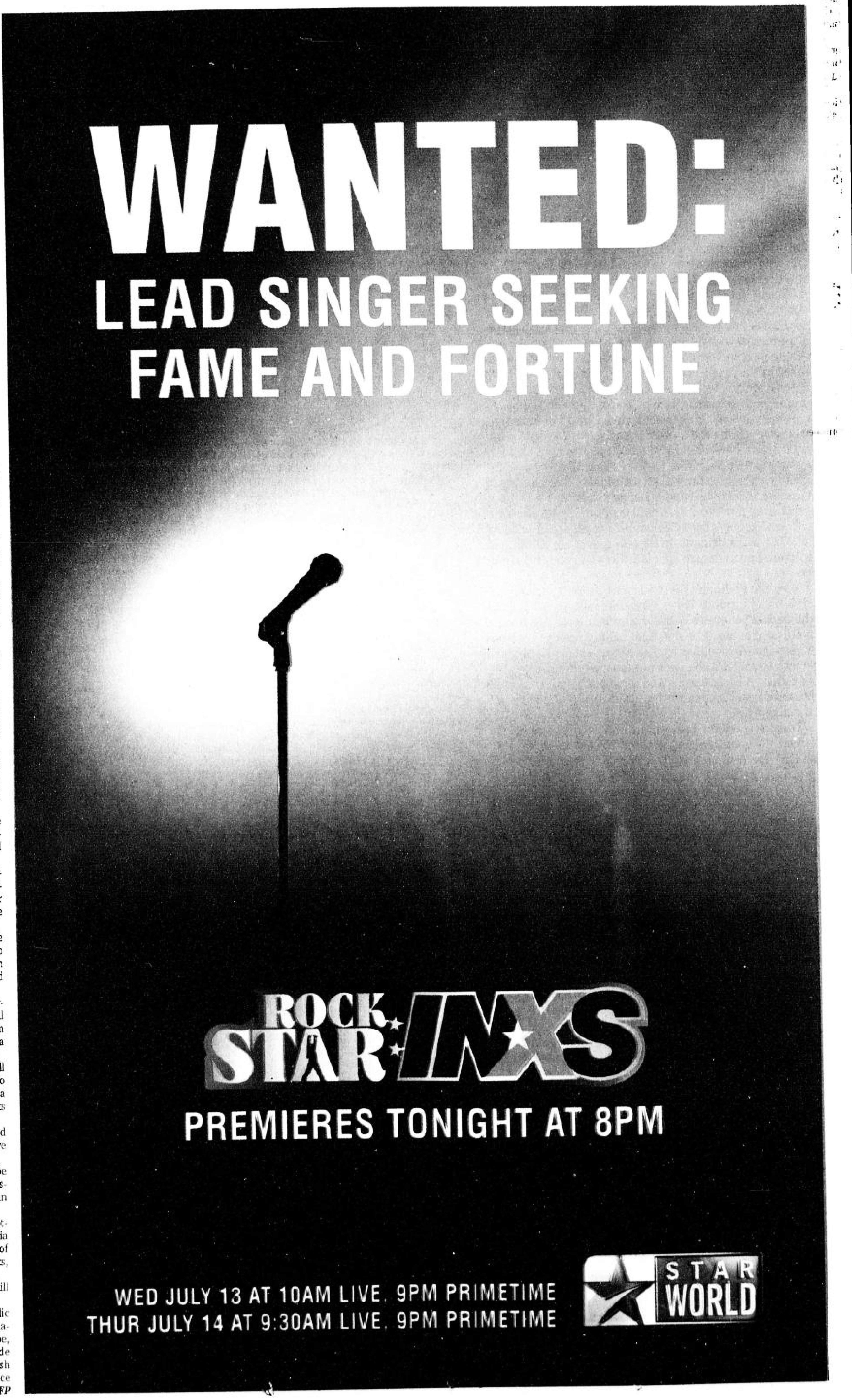
But it is likely that the paparazzi will be combing the crowds with their telephoto lenses to see if they can spot a graceful African woman with an infant in her arms.

After Tuesday's festivities, Albert will doubtless be hoping to move away from the media glare and get down to the serious business of governing his principality of 32,000 residents, of which just 6,000 are Monegasque citizens.

At nearly 50, the tall and balding figure is still largely untried in the ways of government.

In recent years he assumed some public functions, representing Monaco in international forums such as the Council of Europe, but his father never delegated powers inside the state, which was described by the English writer Somerset Maugham as a "sunny place for shady people."

AFP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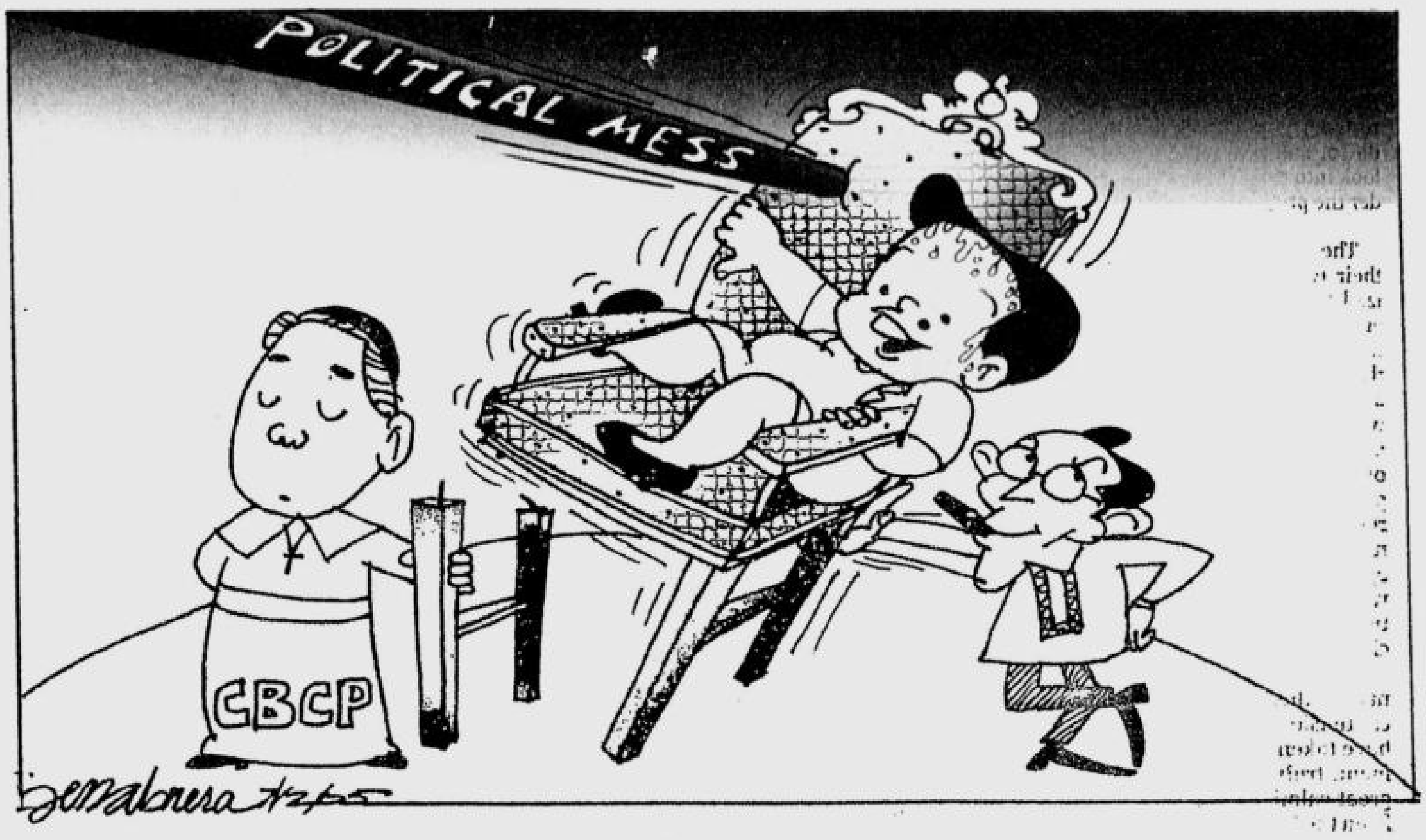

Search for truth

EDITORIAL

IN SOPHOCLES' "Oedipus Rex," the oracle of Delphi prophesies that the son of King Laius and Queen Jocasta would slay his father and marry his mother. The couple turns over their first-born Oedipus to a shepherd to be left to die on a mountain. But the shepherd instead takes the infant to Corinth to be adopted by King Polybus and his childless queen.

Upon attaining manhood, Oedipus, knowing of the prophecy and thinking that he is the son of Polybus, leaves Corinth. On the way to Delphi he comes upon a man with four attendants who try to force him from his path. He kills the man, who is none other than his real father Laius. At Thebes he solves the riddle of the Sphinx and frees the city from a scourge. Hailed as a savior, Oedipus is given the throne and weds the widowed Queen Jocasta (his real mother, though he does not know this.)

Again Thebes is stricken by a plague and Oedipus is asked by the people for a remedy. Oedipus sends Creon to Delphi; the oracle says the plague will recede when Laius' murderer is punished. Oedipus asks the seer Tiresias to find the unclean thing in their midst, and the seer says, "You yourself are the murderer you seek." Oedipus is unrelenting in his search for the truth. Ultimately, Oedipus learns from Jocasta that he is her son. In the most harrowing scene in all drama, a narrator says Jocasta hanged herself and Oedipus blinded himself with her breast pin.

All throughout there is dramatic irony for the audience knows Oedipus is the killer but he himself does not know it. What more heinous crime and graver sin can a man commit than for him to kill his father and marry his mother?

Now, the Philippines is stricken by the plague of another political turmoil. There is no dramatic irony here, for the people believe they know who is responsible for the political trouble. The principal actor herself, President Macapagal-Arroyo, has confessed that she had a "a lapse in judgment." But she does not tell everything about the so-called "Garci tapes." She practically holds herself blameless; she is not punishing herself, she is staying put and digging in.

There is a cry for justice, but how is justice to be obtained? By voluntary resignation? The President has said she is not resigning and is consolidating her forces, preparing to cling to the presidency at all costs. Opinion is divided on the issue of resignation.

So, will it be by impeachment? Speaker Jose de Venecia has said he would endorse the impeachment complaint against the President to the House. But impeachment will be a long process that can expectedly be marked by protracted partisan wrangling. And there is no guarantee that it will not spill out into the streets, the way the impeachment of President Joseph Estrada ended in 2001.

Will the inquiry be conducted by a Truth Commission or a special counsel with broad powers similar to those of the counsel who investigated US President Bill Clinton? There are many ideas that have been put forward and there has been no consensus on any of them.

Now that President Macapagal-Arroyo has obtained what appears to be a temporary breathing spell, some of the people around her are thinking of ways to give her a "graceful exit." A graceful exit for one who has confessed to "a lapse in judgment" and who could have possibly violated the Constitution and betrayed the public trust?

Should not the first priority be given to discovering the truth, and if in the process the guilty are exposed, in punishing the guilty? The charge of dishonesty and rigging of an election is not one to be papered over, forgotten and swept under the rug. Rigging an election is a very serious crime against democracy and against the voters. It has been described by some as the murder of the democratic process.

Sophocles portrayed Oedipus as arrogant, with a tyrant's impatience and ill temper in moments of stress. But to his credit, Oedipus does not stop his inquiry until he finds the horrifying truth about himself, his parentage and his crimes. A literary commentator says that "Sophocles, with supreme skill, combines the terrifying effect of unavoidable doom with the moral teaching that the fruits of excess are always evil."

Will the President want to bring out the truth, the whole truth, even if it will cost her the presidency? Or are we going to be in for a long scourge of political turmoil while the ultimate question of what the truth is about the 2004 presidential election goes unanswered?

Quiet rage

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

THERE'S festering fury out there, if the email on today's crisis over the presidency are any indication.

Mostly professionals, these writers are usually soft-spoken with buttoned-down mannerisms—until you ask about today's controversies. Then, seething wrath erupts. "Disguise fair nature with hard-flavoured rage," Henry V urged his outnumbered soldiers at Hartfleur.

"Given what's now happening, I ask: Will we ever give the country a chance to grow and transform?" asks nnie Montemayor, a graduate of Manila's best schools, now residing in Washington, D.C.

"True, I'm ensconced in my ivory tower. But I've never abandoned the Philippines. 'I never left you' sums up my feelings. Many (Filipinos abroad) feel the same way.

"But some say we have no right to criticize. No right to what? To ruin the country. as they've done? To do as they please, raid coffers, leave nothing for the neediest? To claim a mandate because they were elected by votes they bought? Where is conscience? Can't we peaceably run the country without forever plotting to oust those in power?

"My answer for you (who were) left behind is: You failed us.

"Thus, my quiet rage is: When will our country be ever run for the common good, not for oneself, family and bank account? Are Filipinos that insatiable for power and money? Look at Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia.

"Were the chances extended by our people to Marcos down to Arroyo given in vain? Consider the education of so-called leaders. They didn't lack for idealism. But where, oh where, did they stumble once in power?

"Is love for country, suffer the children and the poor, not enough reward? Will we always be blinded by a tunnel vision for a grab for power? Will our leaders ever learn to wait for their turn? Sadly, there does not seem to be any answer."

From San Diego, California, retired executive Ganny Veloso complains that "newsclips on network TV here are too brief." Items like the London subway bombing smother reports on the Philippine controversies. "What's your take?"

"What the hell is happening to our country? And where are all of these guys bringing us to?" asks ex-US Navy serviceman Francisco Gonzalez. He'd returned to Portsmouth, Virginia, from Manila where he attended a reunion of his De La Salle high school class. He viewed the clips of that Ayala Makati rally organized by Mayor Jejomar Binay and says he's "deeply troubled at the rabble-rousing."

The 91 Catholic bishops, in their statement over the weekend, refused to push the President over the cliff that she repeatedly skirted with sustained *trapo*-politics, notes Benedicto Rosello from Tulsa, Okalahoma. Jump if you want to, Ms Arroyo was told in effect. "So, where does this leave us?"

Rosello adds: "Clearly, the statement factored in the bishops' insights, gained from day-to-day exposure of working directly with people. That balances the metropolis-skewed direction of our debates.

"Even the press assumes that 'he who captures the Palace captures the only government there is.' Well, there's a big country out there. And the statement should improve perspective of our national debate.

"The bishops stressed peaceful and constitutional means for redress of national grievances. The statement blind-sided those angling for power through violence, like the radical Left. These Filipino Maos haven't grasped that their swishing of red banners effectively turns off the people they'd like to harness. Neither have their opposition allies. The lesson of their failure to galvanize people's power hasn't sunk in.

"The bishops added a padlock on military barracks—and that leaves Gringo Honasan & Co. twisting in the wind. Demands for a transitory government to free Joseph Estrada from accountability for plunder have been trashed.

"What we, Filipinos abroad, want to see is Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo using this unexpected last chance to redeem herself. Deeds, not words, are the only currency acceptable now."

Leo Kuizon is a small coconut planter in Bato, Leyte. And he writes to say that the likes of the Estradas, Macedas, Enriles, Tatads offering themselves as saviors rings hollow. They held power before and we became victims, he recalls. His mother died without seeing a single centavo paid for coconut levy certificate dividends.

"Did somebody hit the rewind button?" asks Sally Sasan who forgot to give her address. "Remember when the cry 'Erap Resign' sounded everywhere? Didn't people doubt then if the Vice President was, indeed, any better than Erap?

"Now hit the fast-forward button: TV and print media flash 'GMA Resign' images. Vice President Noli de Castro is waiting. Haven't we been here before? Or will history repeat itself three years from now and President Noli de Castro be forced to step down before his term ends.

"Let us not waste our energy in another ouster. Let Arroyo continue to row this boat, but this time we use our own oars. The next election is not that far anyway. The difficulty we have in accepting responsibility for our behavior lies in the desire to avoid the pain of the consequences of that behavior."

"From this sorry incident, can we move beyond Gloria or Erap or the traditional pols like Drilon, Lacson, Villar, De Venecia to a system change?" asks nurse Marietta Ocampo in Rotterdam.

"With these guys, we will be forever strapped to the treadmill of Sisyphus-like crises," she says. "Until then, I will look for every opportunity to open doors of countries abroad for my children."

Supreme sacrifices

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

I'M glad Dinky Soliman and her confreres have resigned and are taking their former boss to task. I am glad that they have appeared in public to explain their decision to withdraw support from a President who has lost the trust of the people.

But I am not at all glad that they are preening and posturing and making themselves out to be the saviors of a country they helped mightily to oppress. Last I heard, they were attempting to resurrect the civil society they had single-handedly buried six feet under, meeting at the Ateneo in a symbolic throwback to Kompil, preparing to take over what others had begun.

Show some humility, ladies and gentlemen.

In fact, I am not particularly happy with the resignation statement of the Cabinet secretaries, or indeed with Corazon Aquino's call for Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo to resign. Two things are very wrong with it.

The first is that neither statement mentions any wrongdoing on the part of GMA. On the contrary both statements steer clear of it. The resigned Cabinet secretaries made it clear that they were not judging GMA on accusations she cheated in the elections. They were resigning because there "were pressing concerns confronting the nation," at the core of which lay "issues of leadership and credibility." Cory said much the same thing: "I will not judge the lapse of judgment that the President had the humility to confess." She said she was asking the President to resign because "the country cannot continue in its present tumultuous state."

I can understand that Cory wanted to be diplomatic and give her former protégé a face-saving exit. She forgot that to give people a face-saving exit is to presume they have a face, or a less than thick one.

But the problem is far more than that. It is simply that in the absence of wrongdoing, what in hell gives you the right to resign or ask a President to? The unpopularity of a current leader by itself cannot justify it. What if GMA had become unpopular for doing the right thing? What if she had caused a tumult by taking tough decisions, such as precisely the one thing the resigned economic managers wanted, which was to raise the VAT? That justifies leaving a President on the core issue of leadership and credibility?

If the President has done no wrong by the laws of God or (wo)man, nothing can possibly justify abandoning her or driving her out of her office, or mind, whichever comes first. That is not patriotism, that is meanness. Or that is patriotism only of the kind that gives refuge to scoundrels. Romulo Neri has every right to be scathing and deride Cesar Purisima et al.'s show of heroic sacrifice as a lot of posturing. Even GMA has every right to be defiant and remind Cory that, as she very well knows, a president had the sacred duty to carry out her task.

Which brings me to my second point. Neither the group of resigned Cabinet members nor Cory wanted to draw much attention to GMA's wrongdoing because to do so would be to remind the public of their part in abetting or condoning it. They cannot accuse GMA of having cheated in the elections and dragged the country down the path of ruin without having to answer why they never raised a voice to protest it. Indeed, why they gleefully acceded to it, defending it as far back as after GMA confessed to the crime and vowing by way of song to "hold on together."

GMA's wrongdoing did not become patent only last week, it became so well before that. For the Cabinet secretaries to have resigned only last Friday must suggest that what really dismayed them was not that their boss failed to turn the economy around with her promise to reform but that she failed to turn public opinion around by her promise to behave.

None of this is to say that they shouldn't have resigned. All this is to say that at the very least they should stop that cheeky and ubiquitous show of, as Neri puts it, heroic posturing. Or more to the point, that breathtaking effort to present themselves in every conceivable forum as the alternative, with a view to hijacking the campaign to oust a presumptive and presumptuous President for their own ends.

At the very most, that is to say they should do as they preach and apologize for their own part in wreaking iniquity. What can I say? May 2004, after GMA threatened to replace Dinky with Noli de Castro as social welfare secretary: "I feel betrayed!" July 2005, after Dinky threatened to replace GMA with Noli de Castro: "I feel betrayed!" They have more in common than their height.

This core issue of credibility, as the resigned Cabinet secretaries put it, or tumult, as Cory does, arose also because GMA refused to pay for her crime even as she obliquely admitted it. She was neither contrite nor willing to do penance. But at least she has apologized to the nation, however feeble; her resigned Cabinet secretaries have not, however insincere. Far from it, her resigned Cabinet secretaries have seen fit to sit astride a white horse proclaiming to the world they had nothing to do with the atrocity that was her government, the mess was solely their boss' doing, not theirs. Indeed, offering to pluck the country from the quagmire they threw it into.

No, ladies and gentlemen, you may not get away so blithely. Your resignations will mean nothing if you do not yourselves apologize to a people you have deeply wronged. And your apology will mean nothing if you do not vow penitently to have nothing to do with the next government lest you mess it up again with your propensity to be stricken blind with power. Dinky's and Code-NGO's penance should be a little more forthright: Return the Peace Bonds. That is not your money, that is the people's.

What is this, you want your President to make the supreme sacrifice, but you won't?

Calming the nation

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

LAST Friday's four events had the force of powerful seismic shocks: the resignation of 10 key administration officials and their call for President Macapagal-Arroyo to resign, as well as the resign calls issued by former President Cory Aquino, a faction of the Liberal Party led by Senate and LP President Franklin Drilon and the Makati Business Club. These four separate but clearly related moves were obviously timed to influence the Catholic Bishops' Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) to also prevail on GMA to resign. But to their credit, the bishops refused to do so, even as they stressed that the President look into the serious accusations against her under the principle of accountability.

* * *

The bishops' refusal was very deliberate. In their two-day conference, they obviously realized two things. One, that the accusations of election manipulation have not been clearly established by the tapes and neither has their authenticity. This prompted the bishops to support a "thorough, credible and independent process" where these accusations could be ventilated properly. Second, they were clearly aware of two opposing groups. On the one hand, there's the political opposition and now civil society and a representative segment of the business community, both calling for GMA's resignation. Ranged against these are the members of Congress as well as local government officials across the nation—all of them with clear constituencies—majority of whom are supporting GMA.

Had the bishops joined the call for her resignation, this would have exacerbated the political tension and God knows where this would have taken us all. As it turned out, their statement, truly inspired by the Holy Spirit, had a great calming effect on the nation, pulling us from the brink of chaos.

* * *

Vice President Noli de Castro obviously is smarter than many people give him credit for. The conspiring Cabinet officials met with him in Hong Kong last Tuesday, July 5, to reportedly proposition him into accepting the presidency (which they presumed was theirs to give!) in exchange for appointing Drilon vice president and concurrent executive secretary. Two days later, De Castro was asked to meet with former President Aquino who reportedly offered the same deal. But the Vice President did not bite, and last Friday afternoon he was in Malacañang to show support for GMA. Obviously, his thinking was, why should he be beholden to the power brokers when all he has to do is to stand pat and he could find himself president one of these days, the post being one heartbeat or decision away. It's evident that De Castro is not lusting for the post, perhaps because he realizes he's not ripe for it yet.

* * *

As in any fray, there are winners and losers, and in the recent political joust, clearly the biggest winner for the moment is GMA, as she won some badly needed respite to consolidate her forces and plot her next moves. Also in among the winners are the Catholic bishops and Speaker Jose de Venecia, who proved his enormous gift for rallying forces. All throughout the ceremony at the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas last Friday noon, where he received a service award for having conceived and implemented the dollar remittance program that has propped up the economy, JDV was heard rallying various House members to GMA's side on his cell phone. He also succeeded in pulling away some key LP leaders away from the Drilon faction, among them Rep. Rolando Andaya Jr., the House appropriations committee chair.

* * *

By 2 p.m., JDV was in the Palace, dropping in on the Cabinet meeting, with more than a dozen lawmakers from Lakas and other political parties in tow (another dozen Lakas congressmen were at Rembrandt holding a support-GMA press conference). GMA and Interior Secretary Angelo Reyes also managed to summon a sizable number of governors and mayors to the Palace. Later in the afternoon, the Speaker tracked down former President Fidel Ramos at a golf course and requested him to come to the Palace. FVR came with his badly needed speech on Charter change as a way out of the crisis, and later joined GMA in going to Sulo Hotel, where Lakas held a rowdy impromptu show of force for GMA. Where other allies deserted her, Lakas stood by her. The next day, JDV met with 20 bishops and about 500 pastors of the Born Again evangelical group in Manila Hotel and then took them to GMA. Among them were pastors of Eddie Villanueva, who was then holding a small rally at Edsa.

* * *

In the losing column is former President Cory Aquino who's now perceived to have been sweet-talked into supporting the centrist forces against GMA. Her loyal followers would have preferred that she stayed above the fray and stuck to her posture of unifying the country.

But perhaps the biggest loser was Drilon who was quoted yesterday as saying that what led him to go against GMA was her move to delay the E-VAT's implementation. Unfortunately, his faction's efforts to project a clamor for GMA's resignation within the party was forcefully countered by Manila Mayor and LP chair Lito Atienza. Drilon's fellow Ilonggos cannot comprehend how only a week ago he exhorted GMA in Iloilo City to transfer Malacañang there if Manila continued to give her problems. As a result of last Friday's "railroaded" LP vote, Drilon faces a rebellion in Western Visayas, where he is the acknowledged leader, as well as in his party. Five of its six governors have defied him and supported GMA, led by his former staunch ally, Antique Gov. Sally Zaldivar-Perez, daughter of the late Supreme Court justice. Four of them are Liberals, and the only one to join him is Iloilo Gov. Neil Tupas. As Perez put it, "My friendship with the Senate President comes second only to my loyalty to principles. The latter come first." Liberals are now clamoring to return the party leadership to their old members, not the Johnnies-come-lately.

Attack and counter-attack

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

DID they fire the first shot only to lose the propaganda battle? Despite President Macapagal-Arroyo's preemptive radio speech the night before, which was meant to defuse the impact of their collective resignation, the "Hyatt 10" decided to push through with their public statement calling on her to make "the supreme sacrifice for God and country" by resigning her post. But soon after former Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima read their brief statement, the "breakaway" members of the Cabinet refused to take questions from the media and requested that the statement be taken at face value.

It was much the same scenario over at the Manila Peninsula an hour or so later. Here, a visibly jittery Ricardo Romulo read (and reread at the request of TV news crews who came late) the statement of the Makati Business Club likewise calling for the President to resign. The businessmen were joined by leaders of civil society, with Karen Tañada of the National Peace Conference reading the statement signed by representatives of NGOs and a few individuals also calling for the President's resignation. But when reporters lobbed questions at the business and NGO leaders, they likewise demurred and asked that reports be based on their statements.

It didn't take long for the "other" side, the remaining Cabinet members who had met in Malacañang as well for the President's allies in Congress and local governments, to exploit the breakaway faction's silence. For most of Friday and well into the early hours of Saturday morning, Malacañang's attack dogs, led by Environment Secretary Mike Defensor and Cabinet Secretary Ricardo Saludo, hammered away at everyone in the resignation bandwagon. The only one they spared was former President Cory Aquino, but only perhaps because there would be no propaganda gains to be won attacking a grieving widow and icon of democracy.

* * *

QUICKLY, Defensor and company had their song down pat. The events of Friday, they said, comprised nothing less than a "conspiracy" between the departed Cabinet members and officials, the Liberal Party "faction" led by Senate President Franklin Drilon, and big business, to stage a "constitutional coup" by forcing President Macapagal-Arroyo to resign in favor of Vice President Noli de Castro. Drilon would then be step nearer to the seat of power as vice president or executive secretary.

Surprisingly, given the drubbing they were getting at the hands of Malacañang's propaganda machine, the "departed" Cabinet members proved on Saturday still reluctant to come clean on their motivations and the reasons for their very public departure. What had been billed as a show of support and a "welcome home" to the former secretaries, especially those who had been involved in NGOs before joining government, at the Ateneo Loyola campus turned into an impromptu press conference when the media got wind of the event. But in front of cameras and reporters, even in the face of trenchant and hostile questioning, the former Cabinet members chose to waffle their answers.

Former Social Welfare Secretary Dinky Soliman explained that "ethics" prevented them from going into great detail, as they had gathered much of the information on which they based their decision while they were still part of the inner circle, and therefore "privileged." To which one interrogator replied that if ethics prevented them from giving more forthright answers, then they would simply talk to those "without ethics."

* * *

SURE enough, Defensor felt no such qualms, talking to reporters and detailing the heated exchanges among members of the Cabinet in meetings discussing the possible responses of the President to the twin controversies of *jueteng* kickbacks and illegal wire taps.

One question seemed of particular import, aired by former Comelec Chair Christian Monsod: What happened in the week or so between the President's televised apology for her "lapse in judgment" and their collective resignation? Purisima, Soliman and Peace Process Adviser Ging Deles stressed that their doubts regarding the President's political will to install basic social and economic reforms had emerged long before the tapes were even heard. "*Marami kaming nilunok na mahirap lunukin* (We had to swallow a lot of things that were difficult to swallow)," was Soliman's graphic phrasing. The crisis precipitated by the Gloria-Garci tapes only seemed to underscore the President's unwillingness to take politically painful but necessary steps to start the country off on the road to reform, Deles added. So many issues that Arroyo had promised to address but which would put her at loggerheads with influential parties—the coco levy fund and land reform among them—were being shunted to the sidelines while the President struggled for political survival.

* * *

AT THIS point, the "Hyatt 10's" story, the personal and political aspects of it, remains murky, perhaps never to be told in full except for historians seeking to document this troubled episode many years hence. But it seems incredible that they weren't better prepared for the consequences of their actions, particularly Malacañang's counter-attack.

Already, authorities are exploring ways of getting back at them beyond sly innuendoes and media leaks. There's talk of investigations into alleged graft and corruption in their offices, close surveillance of their movements, and even charges of sedition. From a propaganda viewpoint, the "resign" movement should welcome the harassment moves, for it would only turn the former Cabinet members into martyrs and earn more sympathy for them than the public has been willing to give, so far.

Tired

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

(This article started out entitled "Sick and tired." Then I switched to "Not just PGMA." At this point, I'm just tired. Tired of the lies, the manipulations, the grandstanding, the opportunists, the photo-opportunists—the whole 9 yards. I have this nasty feeling of déjà vu and the distinct impression of going through a familiar exercise that will end up in the same unsatisfactory solution. The point is, we're being urged to change faces but without a change in the system. I think we already know the outcome even if we can't face the reality. In the meantime, with all this politics who's minding the problems of unemployment, debt, Mindanao, investments, fuel costs, etc., etc.?)

MY eldest son left the Philippines for calmer (not to mention greener) shores after customs officials descended on the warehouse of the firm he worked for, roused him out of bed at three in the morning and initiated a Gestapo-like search. Whatever they were looking for they didn't find, but the foreign owner didn't bother to press charges. I never found out whether they had a search warrant, or if they were fake agents or they were on a fishing expedition. It didn't matter. I doubt if my son will return. He left saying that the problem here was that "the environment intrudes on you."

Ten years later, it's still intruding and while some of us seek refuge in ETC-Entertainment, "The Insider" or the Lifestyle channel, there is no escaping the ubiquitous, annoying, irritating voices seeking their own political agendas.

I switched channels when PGMA came on air to apologize for her "lapse of judgment." (I figured her first lapse was marrying Mike Arroyo, and her second agreeing to let Iggy and Mikey run for office. Her own daughter who is immensely qualified she did not allow to work at the Department of Foreign Affairs, presumably so she wouldn't be accused of nepotism. But what was sauce for Luli, wasn't sauce for Mikey?)

After Susan Roces screeched her way through a diatribe against the President (I heard about it while I was stuffing my mouth with chocolate cake in frustration during lunch), I wished someone would ask me to go on TV so I could tell the whole lot of them (meaning the entire government and sundry hangers on) to go away and leave us in peace.

You realize, of course, that the myth being offered is that if GMA resigns, everything will be all right. It's the usual one person to blame for everything (before that, it was the US of A and before that, Spain) and if you remove the splinter we'll have no more pain. (Am I mixing my metaphors? I wouldn't doubt it, but you get the general idea). Excuse me? Are we falling for that tired line again? Haven't we heard that siren song once too often?

Are all these people, who are insisting on the resignation of one individual, actually of the belief that if the President resigns, the entire government will suddenly undergo a change of heart, i.e., repent and develop creative thinking abilities, not to mention a conscience and moral values? You really think Jinggoy Estrada or Bong Revilla or Lito Lapid can solve the economic problems of this country? Proof of the failure is the state of the economy and of the country. Sure newspapers claim it's healthy, but ask anyone whose water bill has tripled and whose grocery and electricity bills doubled. Yes, I agree the price of oil has a lot to do with the increase, but on top of that your government wants to add to the VAT. You will also note that there's no mention of reducing the government's percentage of tax on the fuel or any cut in the budgets of senators and congressmen. There are 70 congressmen on trips abroad. Even at only $5,000 each, how much does that add up to?

So don't talk to me. What this amounts to is that the tax-paying public can pay the piper for the excesses and ineptitude of this administration, as they were asked to do for the administration before that and the rest of their predecessors. Furthermore, the unemployment, the lack of foreign investors, the hideous budget deficit, the miserable GNP (cf. to China or Thailand) came before the scandals of *jueteng*, Naia 3, Gen. Carlos Garcia, etc., etc. It's the economy, stupid, as they say.

We are being asked to believe that the solution lies in a change to a parliamentary system. Why? Wouldn't the same idiots be running for office again? Wouldn't they still be perpetuating dynasties and running to protect vested interests? Now if you told me that none of our incumbent elected officials would run, then perhaps there's a chance—a slim one, mind you—that things might be put right. But still we should remember that elections in this country are rigged and voters are bribed.

I very seldom write about current political issues, but I have been asked why I'm keeping above the fray. Well, every other journalist has his say on the matter and is much more knowledgeable about the economy and politics. But you could say I speak for the many housewives who must balance budgets and view the ever-rising prices with alarm and don't know the solution either (or my solution may be a little too drastic).

In a moment of levity, I suggested that we just hire a competent CEO with a track record (of success naturally), who knows what a business plan is and has actually made one and who has had to scrounge to meet a payroll. That way, if he/she doesn't come up to expectations, we could always fire him/her and put out another ad for a new one without all this fuss and histrionics.

Justice

YOUNG BLOOD

Tshaine B. Taguinod

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—**Ed.**

MY professor in Political Thought taught us that "justice is a basic social service" rendered by government to its people. That statement left me wondering not only about whether it was true or not but also whether it applied to the contemporary Philippine setting.

My father was killed in June 1997. He was shot while we were eating dinner. We rushed him to the hospital, where he was pronounced dead a few minutes after our arrival. We sought the help of the police and the Department of Justice, but unfortunately, the case remains unsolved and the gunman remains unidentified.

Soon after my father's death, my mother brought my brother and me to Manila. She was frightened by rumors that the guy who killed my dad was intent on wiping our entire family.

We started a new life in Manila. And we were happy—until my mom declared that she was getting married again. I strongly opposed the idea, but there was nothing I could do to dissuade her. She married this Muslim guy, and I thought to myself, "Fine, so long as she will not abandon us."

After living in Manila for a few years, my mother decided to bring us back to Cagayan. Again, I opposed her idea since I had won scholarships to some prestigious universities there. My mom insisted that it would be better if I enrolled in a college in Cagayan so she could look after me.

In the beginning, life in Cagayan was okay. My mom got a job in the local government and my stepfather put up a rental shop for CDs and tapes. But, soon he and my mom started quarreling. He was accusing her of having an affair with another man.

I asked mom if it was true, and she denied it. I believed her because I knew she was not the kind of woman who would enter into such a relationship.

I pitied my mom because every time they had a fight, he would beat her up and she would just keep quiet. There were times when I defended her and fought my stepdad. I advised my mom on several occasions to leave him, but she would just give me the stupid answer that she loved him. (Yeah, sure, love means enduring all that beating at his hands.) Because of their frequent fights, our house turned into hell.

On Dec. 13, 2004, I came home from school with uneasy feelings that I couldn't quite explain. As soon as I got inside our house, it immediately struck me that the place was unusually very silent. Then I noticed appliances strewn all over the place, some of them broken. I called out to my mother, but no one answered. Several times I called out to her again, my voice starting to break in fear. Still, there was no answer.

I saw my stepdad lying on the sofa and my stepbrother, who was three years old, watching TV intently. I run to their bedroom and there I saw my mom lying on the floor, blood flowing from her head. She had lumps and bruises all over her face and body.

I ran out and asked our neighbors what happened. They told me my stepdad was drunk and he and my mom had a terrible fight.

When I went back inside the house, I examined my mom and immediately realized that she was not breathing anymore. I screamed and my stepdad woke up.

He hushed me and told me to stay calm. He instructed me to go to the hospital and ask for an ambulance, which I did. But when I came back with the ambulance, there was only my stepbrother, still watching TV, and my mom's dead body. My stepdad was nowhere to be found. He had asked me to go for the ambulance so that he could escape.

That man had murdered my mom, although he must not have known she was dead because he was drunk.

We rushed my mom at the hospital but she was declared as dead on arrival. I begged the doctors not to give up and insisted that they continue trying to revive her. But after several minutes, they left. I had to accept the reality that mom was dead.

My two brothers and I have been left to live on our own, relying on the help of some generous people. We struggle to survive and we keep hoping this would be the last of the atrocities to visit our family.

At first, I hated the Guy Up There for our cruel fate. But before long I realized that I have to thank Him for giving me the courage and strength to move on with our life, even as the burden of acting as mother and father has fallen on my shoulders.

We already filed a case against my mom's husband and killer, but the man has not been found six months after her murder. The DOJ has yet to issue a warrant of arrest against him. I am still waiting patiently, but there are times when I begin to entertain doubts about our justice system. Is the woman symbolizing justice blindfolded to show that justice applies to all and that no one is above the law? Or does she wear a blindfold so she can play blind to the victims? Does the blindfold also cover her ear so that she would not hear the questions and pleas of those who cry for justice?

I am still searching for answers to these questions. And I am still searching for examples that will prove that justice is a basic social service rendered by government for people who deserve it.

Tshaine B. Taguinod, 18, is a third year political science student of Cagayan State University.

NOTICE TO YOUNGBLOOD CONTRIBUTORS:

If you are sending your contributions by e-mail, please address it to youngblood@inquirer.com.ph together with your address and information about your age and the school, course and year you're enrolled in or if employed, the position you're holding and the company you work with.

THEY SAID

Unfulfilled

"Film critics said I gave a voice to the fear we all have: that we'll reach a certain point in our lives, look around and realize that all the things we said we'd do and become will never come to be—and that we're ordinary."

—Late actress Anne Bancroft on how she viewed her "The Graduate" role as Ms Robinson

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Body and soul

CONRADO de Quiros raised good points—as he always does—in his column, "Hearts and minds" (PDI, 7/7/05), on the bishops' stand to have the truth on the wiretapped tape "ferreted out in a legal forum." But one thing, among others, that I don't agree with him is his echoing of the "classic" dichotomizing approach to what the Church's role (as represented by the bishops') is in our lives.

He stated, "The bishops do not exist to decide on what's best for this country's political life, they exist to decide on what's best for this country's spiritual life. The bishops do not exist to decide on what's best for this country's body, they exist to decide what's best for this country's soul."

From my own point of view, De Quiros is making a division between the political and the spiritual, as well as between the body and the soul, to the exclusion of one from the other, in determining the realm of concern our bishops must act upon.

But the political life of our country is always in question because it lacks spirituality; and the spirituality in our country stands suspect of being "inutile" for it does not encourage commitment to our country; in effect, the body and soul in this country, the only Christian country in Asia, are viewed and addressed as two separate entities that don't have a common point of communion.

I don't know what De Quiros meant by his title "Hearts and minds." I just hope he is not dichotomizing there.

—**LORENZO CENTINO JR.,**
sanolorenz@yahoo.com

The problem is not in the medium

IN PRINT, radio and TV, we are fed with an increasing daily dose of information about problems that beset our education system. Foremost, is the medium of instruction. The debate goes on—will it be Tagalog, the local dialect, Tagalog and English, the dialect and English, or solely English?

I am 80 years old, a product of the old school, having gone through the primary and intermediate grades in the '30s, graduating from high school in March 1941. The elementary and high school curricula then required seven and four years, respectively. Nursery and kindergarten were not prerequisites. English was the sole medium of instruction in all subjects, from Grade 1 to fourth-year high school.

Of course, our teachers were very good—products of the sound education system. Our textbooks were far superior to the present ones. Does anyone still recall "The Philippine Readers" by Camilo Osias? In the primary and intermediate grades, we were taught language (English), reading and phonics, arithmetic, drawing, writing, music, health education, Philippine geography, world geography, industrial arts for boys and home economics for girls, social science, Philippine history and government, civics and, of course, good manners and right conduct. Physical education was taught in all grades, too.

In high school, we were taught English literature and composition, world history (ancient and medieval), current events, algebra (first course and advanced), plane geometry, general science, biology, Philippine social life, Oriental (Asian) history, American history, applied arithmetic, economics, physics, Tagalog and physical education. We had a choice of Boy Scouting, Girl Scouting or military training.

The annual achievement tests confirmed the superiority of public school education over private school education. The high school publications and newsletters had the professional touch. The high school graduate then was substantially prepared to pursue a college education. We were not less patriotic and nationalistic than the graduates of today despite being taught in English. In fact, many in our generation volunteered to fight in Bataan, despite the shortage of arms and ammunition. Nowadays, students shun military training and conveniently opt for so-called "civic activities."

I suggest that our educators and members of Congress talk to and interview the dwindling members of my generation, including our elders, to obtain a clearer picture of the education system, then and now. This will broaden their outlook on the problems in the education system and help them find possible solutions. Only then will they realize that our education system has been bastardized and emasculated by silly experiments.

A word of caution: Do not expect to solve the problems in a year's time. This might take five or more years, provided you are on the right track.

—**APOLONIO G. RAMOS,**
42 Mindanao St., Marikina City

One last act of decency

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's fall is inevitable. If she was able to survive the past crises and scandals, the *jueteng* allegations against some members of her family and the controversial tapes, which indicates she might have cheated her way to victory in the 2004 elections, would put her in the dump.

She claims to have won by more than a million votes in that electoral contest. This time she must pray that a big number of people will not march on Malacañang to oust her. But heaven could turn deaf to her prayers. Even the Church might close its doors, and priests might join the protests for her ouster. Then she could only hope that El Shaddai would not join and wave handkerchiefs marked with the words "Oust Gloria."

As time ticks, GMA must start to count her allies who are now starting to test the waters, leaving her to take the heat in her "kitchen" alone. Soon she will find nobody, but Big Mike and the Lion King by her side. So, where shall the embattled family go? A night in Las Vegas is one great option.

And Erap must be wearing now his biggest smile in Tanay, Rizal, while playing poker. He must be thinking that if there was a witness named Emma Lim in his impeachment trial, there are now Sandra Cam and Sammy Ong hounding Ms Arroyo. Anyway, GMA should hope that no one like Chavit Singson and Clarissa Ocampo will come out against her.

One more thing, Ms Arroyo's track record as President since 2001 is not impressive enough. Her "strong republic" is now a "banana republic" characterized by corruption, political unrest, killings, poverty and economic instability. The strong republic is now a "wrong republic" where even the President is perceived to have lied, cheated and betrayed the people.

With the lingering doubts about GMA's credibility and moral ascendancy, another people's revolt is becoming more possible. The President should now decide either to resign or be ousted by the people. Even though a graceful exit seems no longer tenable for her because of her betrayal of the public trust, she should at least perform one last act of decency, if she knows one. And I hope she will not fake it again.

—**JONATHAN F. SO, KAMP (Kalipunan ng mga Katutubong Mamamayan ng Pilipinas), 48-A Mapagbigay St., Pinyahan Dist., Diliman 1128, Quezon City, kamp_phils@yahoo**

PARA SA
SOSYALISTANG
PILIPINAS

CARDINAL SIN: a hero and role model

Sin exploited power to achieve peace

JAIME Cardinal Sin was holy. Seventy-seven years of being human, an angel for eternity.

I thought one of these days, I'd meet my *casimanwa*, but he shall be a saint I'd pray to from now on.

Cardinal Sin showed us Filipinos how to exploit power without inflicting immense physical pain or death on each other to acquire peace, how to unite humanity through the great inspiration of Jesus Christ's struggles. He was so faithful that we are in awe of his words. He followed Christ's example and showed us that we will be lifted up in the end. Cardinal Sin is the heart and soul of a conscientious Filipino, of a universal man.

He never gave bundles of money, in fact, he accepted them and, yet, we respect him tremendously. He had no fancy cars, no sprawling mansions and no troves of gold; still, he commanded millions of people with his words. That's power. A pure one. When power was all the rage, the cardinal made no excuses, he exercised power soundly, he kept the lion in his cage (one, literally).

Cardinal Sin took no personal pride or credit as the man who bestowed President Cory Aquino and President Macapagal-Arroyo the power through his flock. By his word, he was an instrument, a donkey the Lord rode on.

He is now a role model and a hero in the highest order. Cardinal Sin was a holy man. Faith, indeed, can move mountains.

—**GREG SALIDO QUIMPO,**
99 Westbank St., Floodway,
Maybunga Village, Pasig City

Preposterous view on English language

THIS is in reaction to the letter of Jonathan Balsamo, titled "English will destroy Philippine Society." (PDI, 6/14/05) His is a preposterous view. For years and until now, our knowledge of the English language has placed our country at the top of the list of the world's literate societies.

Pseudo-nationalism, which is actually either a perverted sense of humility or another manifestation of "crab mentality" to keep everyone else ignorant, has always been a stumbling block to progress. He showed the Filipino's penchant for short-term, short-sighted, egotistic and microcosmic "solutions" presented in the guise of "nationalism."

Balsamo is also unclear as to what aspect of Philippine society will be so shattered by the English language. Our psyche and moral values have long ago disintegrated; the language we speak has nothing to do with this.

How English can destroy a society that is already morally bankrupt is beyond my ken. More importantly, the steady decline in the quality of our students and graduates clearly serves as a warning that due to their waning proficiency in English, Filipino kids today could have a hell of a time securing a bright future for themselves.

—**RAMON VICENTE BERENGUER,**
monberenguer@yahoo.com

Heroes are also human

MANUEL Almario writes that Ambeth Ocampo "shows a distorted sense of history" and "on every occasion finds a way to denigrate our heroes and the Filipino people." (PDI, 5/10/05) We should "view the totality of the lives of our heroes," Almario argues, and look at the heroes' great accomplishments and sacrifices instead of dwelling too much on their foibles. They are, after all, human, and "to err is human."

In saying so, Almario actually vindicates Ocampo's writings. Indeed, in the spirit of "totality," Ocampo gives his readers an honest, if playful, take on the under-reported and forgotten episodes of our heroes' lives.

To expect Ocampo to focus solely on why heroes should be honored is like asking a PR officer to extol just his benefactors' virtues. As students of history, we have had plenty of those "praise pieces," courtesy of our history textbooks.

It was from the textbooks, for instance, that we learned that the great Antonio Luna was actually murdered by his men. But it was outside the classroom, particularly in Ocampo's column, that we heard Luna was a hothead who cursed and slapped his men.

Years back, it was also in Ocampo's column that I learned that Juan Luna, the great painter of the "Spoliarium," killed his wife and mother-in-law in a fit of jealousy in Paris; also, how the Tejeros Convention was marred by election irregularity, causing Andres Bonifacio to break ranks with Emilio Aguinaldo. To be sure, these claims are not mere rumors but are supported by documents.

Showing how these heroes were like ourselves—with human imperfections and all—equally shows our capacity or potential for greatness. Or, it could also show us how much we have not changed after all these centuries!

I was Ocampo's student in the Rizal college class in the Ateneo. There, among many others, Ocampo taught us to read and appreciate Rizal in the original. That meant going back to the primary sources, without the benefit of sanitized and distilled textbooks, and read Rizal's published letters and reread his novels.

To say the least, this fruitful exercise made his students realize a number of historical inaccuracies and misimpressions previously spoonfed by rigid textbooks and perpetuated by misinformed teachers.

The above are just few examples of how much we do not know our history. If to "distort history" is to reread, revisit and rethink our knowledge and impressions of our heroes and their works, then I would love to have it "distorted" over and over.

To answer Almario's last question: Is Ocampo the right man to chair the National Historical Institute and the National Commission on Culture and the Arts? If only to rouse Filipinos from the deep slumber of historical ignorance, then my answer would be "yes."

—**WILLARD CHENG,**
727 Tomas Mapua Street,
Sta. Cruz, Manila

Will you participate in a new People Power? Why or why not?

NO, kasi paulit-ulit nlang, para na tayong mga sirang plaka. Walang nbago. Nakakasawa na!
—**Cherry Alcoberes, 26,** *Davao City*

another people power may prove to b disastrous to d economy as it sends a message that we are a nation where laws are dictated upon by the masses and powerful politicians.
—**al ongchua, 30,** *davao city*

YES! Gloria cares more about POWER than PEOPLE! Let People take her Power! Gloria must RESIGN!
—**Marsha Verde, 25,** *Baliuag*

a big NO! Just a waste of tym. We hav 2 pray 4 d opposition 2 keep in their hearts REAL LOVE OF COUNTRY as they say!
—**sonia villena, 44,** *batangas city*

NO, coz what we need RIGHT NOW is to MOVE ON and to STOP COMPLAINING.
—**ROMMEL BELEN, 32,** *MKNA CITY*

nakakasawa na. other countries think our democracy lies in the streets. not so many even understand d meaning of people power
—**simon Ibarra,** *qc*

YES, if Atty. Paguia aamin kung cn0 nag bigay tape sa kanya.
—**ding succor, 24,** *cotabato city*

No, 8s divisive chaotic unconstitutional, reflecting poor grasp of events n knowledge. Most can do is pray 4God's intervention n educate d masa
—**Dr Z., 44,** *cdo*

No. After People Power, what? Malabo. Let us respect our laws and constitution.
—**Antonio Andaluz, 48,** *Paranaque City*

my answer is no. Those who want to, just let them. but will we let our day b wasted? Leave alone d problems to the officials. Why waste a day in it? We can still make a difference, but in a different way. Participating in a new people power is not the only solution.
—**francis emralino,** *san pblo city*

Tyron Edwards said: Ryt actions 4 d future, is d best apologies 4 wrong ones in d past. Call 4 a Transitional Revolutionary Government!
—**Melvin, 22,** *qc*

NO. PEOPLE POWER here are SARSUELA provoked by RICH POLITICIANS. PEOPLE has nothing to do with these shows!
—**CHERRY PIE Tacorda, 33,** *Marikina*

Gagawin ko
what's best
4 d country

Yes! I will participate in a new people power. This is our brilliant move to oust PGMA and other political riders.
—**Nido Perez, 42,** *Quezon City*

No. After People Power, what? Malabo. Let us respect our laws and constitution.
—**Antonio Andaluz, 48,** *Paranaque City*

i wil nt participate since the next people power could be bloody and violent, it should be put into peaceful action.
—**catherine felipe, 21,** davao city

ppol powr agen, are we not all tired of going 2 d streets airing our voices we don't rily hear! We are just lyk a clamor of noisy gong.
—**Ian D. Laput, 28,** *mandaluyong city*

no! I'll juz wait for a proper constitutional means, if not effective, then u'll probably see me in the streets then…
—**jet flores, 22,** *makati*

If you were President Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo and faced with the current controversies, what would you do?

i wud surrender my life 2 d lord, ask Him 4 forgiveness and ask His will b done in my life, and den ask d people 2 decide on my fate.
—**tricia pribhdas, 41,** *qc*

iF i were Gma & i believe d people voted 4 me i wuld hav ordered d opening of d ballot boxes, ordered a recount 2 erase all doubts.
—**Al villaganas, 52,** *cavite city*

i wil just stay with my job, i wil do da best things 4 da people 2 know that even b4, im doing somthin 4 da country
—**jason mamawal,** *Tarlac City*

if im pres.Arroyo, i will ask God 4 a good decisi0n and if requires 2 step down, i will do so.
—**sabina magbanua, 25,** *taguig*

ayl do what marcos did. We nid discipline. Diz politicians r dragging us down 4 personal interest! Hu among us is clean?
—**simve merzo rambuyon,** *cagayan de oro city*

I strongly believe that Pres. GMA did not cheat in the elections. As president, she is not perfect.. but she is doing her best.
—**Juan Deveraturda,** *Subic, Zambales*

To be president of the republic is not a "PRIVILEGE" it is a "DUTY" to the nation. Now is it supreme SACRIFICE for her to resign? She must stay.
—**Armando I. Subijano, 53,** *Malabon city*

if i were GMA, I WILL RESIGN! if people no longer trust her leadership, her being firm NOT TO STEP DOWN, no longer medicates the crisis, but aggravates the more!
—**may g. malapitan,** *quezon city*

I CONTINUE DO my Duties & Responsibilities. SHOW to our Whole Nation that my SORRY was SINCERE. Pray sa mga Balingbing!
—**Ed Randolph, 23,** *Sorsogon*

I WIL NOT RESIGN. D thousands or so pipol hu r noisily calling 4 resignation are not THE PEOPLE. Duh? There are 80million Filipinos.
—**Joan Marie B. Bargas,** *Roxas City*

i wil go to Vatican n walk kneeling frm door towards main altar while leaving 2 Congress 2 decide my presidential fate.
—**obet huele,** *cavite*

GMA is stil legally innocent n President. C Must fyt on 4d pipol hu kickd Erap out, hu wil never march wid d outdated or revised reds, surely not with the likes of Lacson, Binay, Jinggoy, JV, Escudero, Imee. She must fight on for those who voted 4 and believe in her presidency, 4 her reforms, for d Constitution, and the rule of lew. I'd fight SMARTLY.
—**rene locsin,** *QC*

I will call for a SONA, bow my head and say: People of the Philippines, I RESIGN!
—**Hubert Hernandez, 28,** *zamboanga city*

I will be more determined to make this country more progressive and solve the country's problems.
—**Gibson Noel Hamlag, 14,** *Tagbilaran*

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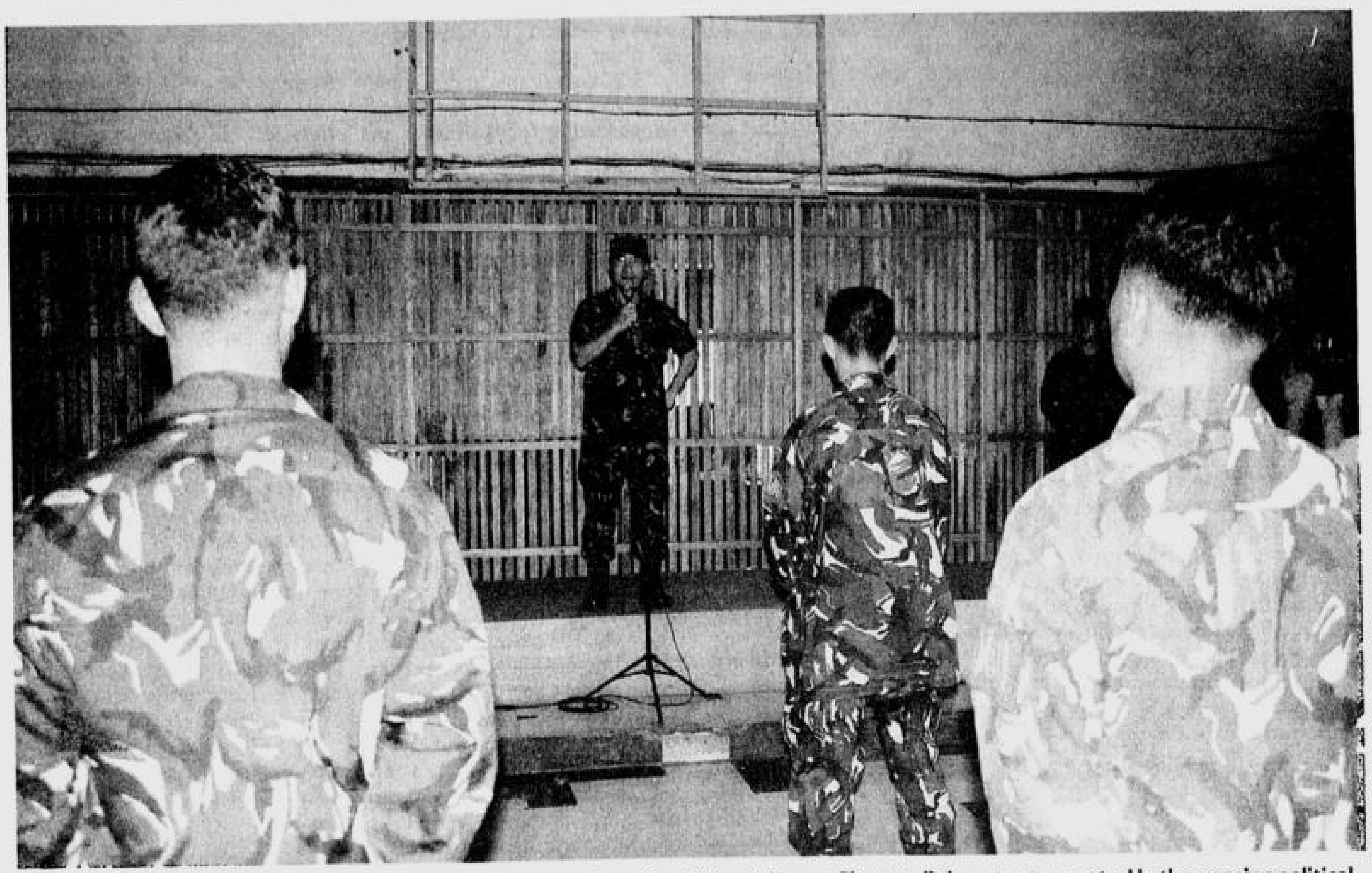

INCOMING Armed Forces chief Lt. Gen. Generoso Senga talks with soldiers in Davao City to tell them to stay neutral in the ongoing political crisis in Metro Manila.

DENNIS JAY SANTOS/PDI MINDANAO BUREAU

GMA backers in 2001 VP race move around to gather sympathy

BAGUIO CITY—Some of President Macapagal-Arroyo's supporters who helped her win the vice presidency in 2001 and the presidency in 2004 have started knocking on neighborhood doors to convince residents about the President's integrity amid charges of election fraud and corruption confronting her and her relatives.

Lawyer Concepcion Luis, former Baguio coordinator of the Kaibigan ni Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo (KGMA), said KGMA members are going house to house or are organizing civic group discussions to counter the demands for resignation from former President Corazon Aquino, some of Ms Arroyo's Cabinet members and militant groups.

This initiative is distinct from a plan of action that is being drawn up by the administration party Lakas, Luis said.

"We are not politicians, so we know for a fact that the President has invested a lot of political capital in her numerous trips to the [provinces], and we are appealing to the people she touched [to trust her]," she said.

"This is a president who has gone to the most interior towns of the country. No president has gone down a makeshift set of bamboo stairs [during Ms Arroyo's June trip to Tublay, Benguet]. People remember that," Luis said.

Carlos Honorio Estepa, a KGMA Cordillera coordinator, said these activities have not been sanctioned by the KGMA leadership, "which is a loose organization that served its purpose during the campaign."

"But these are actions of her *kaibigan*, her friends, and they are coming out to show their color to prove [to the provinces] that [the President] must be given a chance to defend herself," he told the INQUIRER in a telephone interview on Monday.

Estepa, who is also a member of the Philippine Chamber of Commerce and Industry's board of advisers for North Luzon, said the instability generated by public protests, and by the resignation of 10 of Ms Arroyo's key Cabinet members, "has affected local businesses the most because these are the industries foreign investors deal with first."

"We are the ones who strike these deals, who negotiate these deals, and we are the ones now explaining to investors why these things are happening to our country," Estepa said, quoting feedback from business groups in the Ilocos, Cagayan Valley, Cordillera and Central Luzon. *Vincent Cabreza, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Local execs in Visayas rally behind President

LOCAL officials in the Visayan provinces of Cebu, Negros Occidental, Capiz and Eastern Samar continued to rally behind President Macapagal-Arroyo amid calls for her resignation.

At least 103 elected officials in the province and city of Cebu yesterday signed a manifesto, reaffirming their "full and unconditional support" for the embattled Chief Executive.

"We condemn in no uncertain terms the demands for her resignation. Due process is non-negotiable. The rule of law must prevail," the manifesto said.

"We denounce in the strongest terms possible the efforts of certain quarters, including so-called 'allies' of the administration, to take advantage of the present political crisis for their selfish political and economic interests," it added.

They lauded Ms Arroyo for her decision to stay in office so she could focus on her social and economic reform agenda as well as to encourage the constitutional processes to commence and sift through the "dizzying" accusations that had been hurled against her in the hopes of uncovering the truth.

Before the local officials signed the manifesto, Cebu Gov. Gwendolyn Garcia read its contents at about 2 p.m. yesterday at the Capitol session hall.

In her speech, Garcia said she intentionally gathered the elected officials in the city and province in order to speak "with one voice" to tell those that sought to speak for the country "that Manila is not the Philippines and the Philippines is not just Metro Manila."

The department heads of the Cebu City government also issued their own manifesto of support to Ms Arroyo and condemned the "power grabbers and opportunists."

"With the Catholic Bishops, we will not demand her resignation. We will heed the call of the President to end political bickering and go about to fulfill our sacred duties and defend the Constitution," said the manifesto signed by 24 department heads of Cebu City.

In Capiz, local officials belonging to the Liberal Party have remained supportive of the President, even if a faction of LP in Manila led by Senate President Franklin Drilon had asked Ms Arroyo to step down.

Capiz Gov. Vicente Bermejo, LP provincial chair, maintained that they adopted the stand of province-mate Sen. Mar Roxas, who said that allegations against the presidency and the institutions responsible for the electoral process demand resolution through a fact-finding commission or impeachment.

"We still considered Roxas as our LP leader in Capiz. What Roxas stands for is also the stand of LP in Capiz," he added.

He added they were not for Ms Arroyo's resignation but would prefer constitutional processes, like impeachment, to prevail.

Bermejo said resignation remained a "personal option" to the President and should not be forced upon her.

Eastern Samar Gov. Ben Evardone, for his part, lauded the decision of the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines (CBCP) not to join the mounting clamor for her resignation, saying it would help "serve as a guiding light for all of us."

"The statement generally reflects the overwhelming sentiment of the Filipino people on democracy, Constitution and due process," said Evardone, the league's spokesperson, in a text message to the INQUIRER.

Evardone, also spokesperson of Union of Local Authorities in the Philippines (Ulap), said the government could now "proceed to the more urgent task of nation-building."

Local officials in Negros Occidental have refused to join mounting calls for the President to resign.

The United Negros Alliance (UNA), composed mostly of elected leaders in the province, issued a statement, supporting Ms Arroyo and her programs. *Jhunnex Napallacan, Jolene Bulambot, Felipe Celino, Carla Gomez and Joey Gabieta, PDI Visayas Bureau*

ARMM bets' peace backing sought

COTABATO CITY—A supplementary peace pact to the Aug. 8 regional elections will be signed by candidates to get Muslims off calls for secession.

Rigoberto Tiglao, head of the Presidential Management Staff, on Saturday told the INQUIRER that an electoral agreement among parties should include upholding of the government's peace negotiations with the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

Tiglao said this may include a pledge by gubernatorial candidates that whoever wins in the election would give way to whatever a signed peace agreement would require of them.

The MILF has rejected the ARMM as a peace package. The secessionist group has considered a federal set up as an option, although it said it has not abandoned its cause for an independent Bangsamoro state.

Administration gubernatorial candidate Zaldy Ampatuan vowed to give way to any political settlement the government may reach with the MILF, if he won the race.

Last week, the Department of National Defense called candidates into a peace covenant. Signatory candidates include Ampatuan (Lakas Christian-Muslim Democrats), Ibrahim Paglas III (Liberal Party) and Mahid Mutilan (Ompia Party) and with their running mates Ansaruddin Adiong, Hata Dimaporo and Assemblyman Esmael Abubakar Jr., respectively.

Not present during the signing were incumbent ARMM Gov. Parouk Hussin and former Maguindanao Rep. Guimid Matalam of the united opposition.

Hussin bolted the Lakas-CMD after a faction of the Moro National Liberation Front (MNLF), whose 15-man ruling council he heads, called for a boycott of the regional elections.

Nash Maulana, PDI Mindanao Bureau

Afable says he'll stay in peace talks

PALACE Communications Director Silvestre Afable Jr. announced he was dismantling the Office of the Communications Director on orders of President Macapagal-Arroyo.

In a statement, Afable said, however, that he would stay on as member of the government team that is negotiating for a peace agreement with the separatist group Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF).

"The President instructed me to dismantle the Office of the Communications Director (OCD) as part of her overall streamlining program," said Afable in his statement.

Afable said he was winding down the operations of the OCD in two weeks and focus on his work as a peace negotiator.

He said the talks will resume in Kuala Lumpur toward the end of the month.

The US government has expressed hopes the Philippine government and the MILF would seal an agreement for peace.

US officials had said millions of dollars worth of aid packages were to be made available should the peace negotiations succeed.

Afable expressed optimism the talks would succeed and said he was committed to fulfilling his mission as a peace negotiator.

The MNLF is demanding for a separate Islamic state in Mindanao but expressed willingness to discuss possible autonomy as a compromise.

Quezon town councilor killed

LUCENA CITY—A town councilor of Candelaria, Quezon was shot dead yesterday while he was on his way home from a municipal session.

Police identified the victim as Councilor Jose Landicho, 50, resident of Barangay Malabanban Norte.

According to Supt. Rueben Sindac, chief of the Quezon police investigation and intelligence section, the councilor was aboard his jeep when he was waylaid at the boundary of Barangay Malabanban Norte and Barangay Mangilag Sur at about 11 a.m.

Police said the killer was riding at the back of the driver of a red sports motorcycle.

The victim was shot with a .45 cal. pistol in different parts of the body. *Delfin Mallari Jr., PDI Southern Luzon Bureau*

FEDERATION OF PHILIPPINE INDUSTRIES, INC.
THE VOICE OF INDUSTRY

STATEMENT OF THE
FEDERATION OF PHILIPPINE INDUSTRIES

We businessmen are disturbed by the precipitate actions that are happening in our society today, which may interfere with the reforms that we have called for, and the need to address our pressing economic and social issues.

We believe that President Arroyo's call for the resignation her entire cabinet is a signal of her resolve to cleanse her cabinet to answer our calls for drastic reforms for the sake of our nation and our people. We respect but deeply regret the call by our friends in the cabinet belonging to the ecomic and social welfare teams for the President to resign. We have spoken to these friends and respect their decision to do what they have done from their position and perspective as this is their prerogative under a democratic system. We worked closely with these members, we respect them, and we hope that our paths will continue to cross in the service of our country and our people.

In this time of crisis, we must strengthen our resolve not only to call for reforms but to see that they are properly implemented by working together and speaking out towards these directions. The statement of the President that she will not allow the work of every department to be impeded calls for each of us to help and to reform where reforms are needed, always addressing the pressing economic and social concerns that confront our people.

We firmly believe that resignation of the president is purely voluntary and cannot be forced upon her.

We also respect the political processes that proceed in every democracy, and urge that every action shall continue to be consistent with the provisions of our constitution.

Businessmen are generally optimists and see opportunities amidst the challenges that confront us. Let us see how we turn our problems into concrete reforms for the good of all.

Meneleo J. Carlos, Jr.
Chairman

Jesus L. Aranza
President

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RP credit rating in peril

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these two rating agencies is likely in the near term.

A downgrade could affect the country's ability to service its debts because it raises the cost of borrowing. National Treasurer Omar Cruz acknowledged that the downgrade could raise the cost of government borrowing.

Weakened leadership

London-based Fitch, which had been the most optimistic about the country's prospects among major global rating agencies even after Malacañang declared a fiscal crisis in August last year, was the first to announce the downgrade.

"Fitch believes that in the context of the current political turmoil, it is open to question whether the weakened leadership will commit the necessary political capital to resolving the e-VAT issue soon," it said in a statement.

The resignation of the government's highly regarded economic managers led by ex-Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima, in particular, triggered fears of a possible reversal of the fiscal reform program that was the single biggest source of optimism among investors in the first few months of the year prior to the election-rigging scandal linking Ms Arroyo.

Fitch placed the country's rating on a "negative" outlook since December last year but changed this to "stable" in May because of significant strides in fiscal reforms, including the passage of the e-VAT law.

United States-based S&P voiced concern over the country's ability to maintain the fiscal consolidation needed to reduce its high level of public and external indebtedness.

"The combination of delayed fiscal consolidation, protracted political stalemate and a possible change in economic policy has shifted the balance of risks onto the downside, making a stable outlook no longer justified," S&P said.

It said its concerns stemmed from the political crisis sparked by allegations of electoral impropriety by the President and punctuated by the Supreme Court's freezing of the e-VAT and the departure of Ms Arroyo's economic team.

Over the weekend, Purisima and former Trade Secretary Juan Santos said a major factor behind their resignation was Ms Arroyo's alleged role in the Supreme Court's order freezing the implementation of the e-VAT amid the political turmoil. *(See related story on the front page.)*

Acting on petitions of the opponents of the e-VAT law, the high court froze on July 1 the e-VAT, which would raise the cost of electricity and fuel, airline and shipping fares and other previously exempt items, hours after its implementation.

Major setback

Fitch said a rating downgrade could be triggered by protracted delays in the Supreme Court decision, by an eventual decision that the e-VAT legislation was unconstitutional or by continued political disorder.

Fitch currently rates the country's long-term foreign currency rating at "BB" or two notches below investment grade and S&P, at BB-minus or three notches below investment grade.

In seeking a temporary restraining order (TRO) on the e-VAT implementation, opposition lawmakers had said it was unconstitutional for the President to increase the e-VAT rate from 10 percent to 12 percent next year.

The government is set to submit written arguments in preparation for oral hearings on July 14.

"The TRO was a major setback for the centerpiece of the government's fiscal reform program, especially given that no time frame has been set for a court decision," said James McCormack, senior director in Fitch's sovereign group.

"The e-VAT is critical to enhancing the Philippines' medium-term fiscal prospects and improving its public debt sustainability," he said.

Wake-up call

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas Governor Amando Tetangco Jr. said the government was pushing for the lifting of the TRO so that "this measure can be allowed to contribute to further fiscal improvement."

Renato Pizarro, the government economic team's head of investor relations, said the latest action by the rating agencies was an "unfortunate consequence" of the current political disturbances which displaced attention on the country's economic gains.

"This is a wake-up call for all of us to urgently shift our energies and attention to the economic imperatives ahead of us, lest we find ourselves in considerably fragile ground where the gains we have had from recent fiscal and economic reforms will be substantially eroded by political tensions," Pizarro said.

Financial markets

While the TRO was in effect, Pizarro said the government would concentrate revenue-generation efforts on all fronts.

A currency dealer said the foreign exchange market would trade sideways while digesting further developments on the political front.

Another trader said that "as long as the problem is there, trading will continue to be within the upper range of 56.20-56.45." The latter figure is the all-time low for the local unit.

Jose Vistan, an analyst at AB Capital Securities, said the stock market was bearish on concerns of a drawn-out political turbulence.

"The preference is not whether GMA would stay or not, but that it's best to end this political crisis," Vistan said.

"At this point, any resolution is better than status quo or a prolonged situation where the President has lost the confidence of businessmen," said Joseph Roxas, president of stock brokerage Eagle Equities Inc.

Crisis to worsen

Others expect the political crisis to worsen.

"She has managed through the intervention of former President (Fidel) Ramos as well as the Catholic Church to hold onto power. President Arroyo has set the stage to continue political mud-slinging," said Tim Condon, head of Asian financial markets research at ING Financial Markets.

S&P expressed concern that recent events may exacerbate the country's external vulnerability to three global trends: moderating growth, rising interest rates and skyrocketing oil prices.

With public sector debt of more than 90 percent of gross domestic product and net general government external debt of 48 percent of current account receipts, the Philippines is considerably more exposed to these risks than its peers, according to S&P.

S&P said the country's ratings continued to be backed at the current level by adequate external liquidity given its stable foreign reserves. But it said this support could be negated by a drawn-out political crisis and by lower investor confidence that could precipitate a sharp fall in the peso and foreign exchange reserves through capital flight. *With reports from Reuters and AFP*

IN THE KNOW

What the current ratings mean

Fitch considers BB rating a "speculative" grade: "BB" ratings indicate a possibility of credit risk developing, particularly as a result of adverse economic change over time. However, business or financial alternatives may be available to allow financial commitments to be met.

Based on Moody's definition of bond ratings, bonds rated "B" generally lack characteristics of the desirable investment, while assurance of interest and principal payments or maintenance of other terms of the contract over any long period of time may be small.

According to Standard & Poor's, an obligor rated "BB" is less vulnerable to nonpayment than other speculative issues. However, it faces major ongoing uncertainties and exposure to adverse business, financial or economic conditions which could lead to the obligor's inadequate capacity to meet its financial commitments.

Doris C. Dumlao

No GMA influence . . .

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cusations . . . that Ms Arroyo prevailed over the Supreme Court to issue a temporary restraining order against the e-VAT for the purpose of defusing the tense political situation."

"The court simply, and as a matter of course, acted on the four petitions filed by four consumer and political groups questioning the legality of the e-VAT Law," it said.

Senate President Franklin Drilon had earlier told the INQUIRER that a "rumor" that Ms Arroyo had a hand in the TRO was the "tipping point" that prompted seven Cabinet members and three agency heads led by Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima to resign Friday.

Drilon said the Cabinet members felt the President would make compromises and sacrifice vital reforms like the e-VAT, the centerpiece of Ms Arroyo's economic reform program, to ensure her political survival.

Falsely accused

Sen. Joker Arroyo slammed Drilon for his allegation against the Supreme Court.

"No responsible member of the bar has ever dared in the past to suggest that anyone, not even the President, can lasso a big bloc of justices to vote the way the President wants it," Arroyo said in a statement.

"It is just statistically impossible. Yet the Supreme Court has been irresponsibly dragged and falsely accused in the current political crisis," the senator said.

Arroyo noted that 13 justices (86 percent) voted for a TRO and two (14 percent) voted against it. In the Senate, he recalled that the vote was 15 (65 percent) for the e-VAT and eight (35 percent) against.

"If even in the Senate, where the President did some arm twisting and patronage dangling, the most she got was 65 percent, how could anyone trifle that in the Supreme Court the 86 percent vote was the result of presidential interference?" Arroyo said.

He said that even during martial law, when justices were under constant threat, the most that dictator Ferdinand Marcos got was 77 percent of the vote.

At a briefing, Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye said the President would implement the e-VAT once the high court lifted the TRO.

He said the President was committed to the e-VAT law, including increasing the VAT rate from 10 percent to 12 percent, because it would raise revenues and address fiscal problems.

Bunye made the reaffirmation after Purisima and former Trade Secretary Juan Santos insinuated that the President might have influenced the Supreme Court to grant the TRO.

Rigoberto Tiglao, Presidential Management Staff chief, said Purisima and Santos had "misread" the President.

Tiglao said there was no truth to the allegation that the President had wanted the e-VAT postponed because of the political crisis.

"There are some advisers who recommended that the e-VAT be postponed simply because it could magnify the impact of rising oil prices. It was not because of the political crisis," he said.

He said either Santos had misread the President or he was not being intellectually honest.

Bunye said the fact that government lawyers were moving quickly to have the TRO lifted showed that the President considered the e-VAT a flagship measure.

"She worked hard to make this pass and I don't think the President will do something to prejudice the fiscal program of the government," Bunye said.

Unfortunate

The TRO has already prompted Fitch and Standard & Poor's to downgrade the country's outlook from stable to negative.

"It is unfortunate that Fitch suddenly reversed the outlook on the Philippines' credit rating from stable to negative. Their concern about the TRO on the e-VAT is a temporary setback on the reform program and should not derail the fiscal targets this year," Bunye said.

He said the President would soon announce the replacements of the seven Cabinet secretaries and three agency officials who resigned last week.

The President has already assigned officers in charge to man the main agencies, tapping Deputy Commissioner Jose Mario Bunag to head the Bureau of Internal Revenue and Deputy Commissioner Alexander M. Arevalo to lead the Bureau of Customs.

With a report from Juliet Labog-Javellana

Whatever happened to magic of Cory?

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and bring a swift end to the political chaos engulfing the country.

No personal motive

It elicited the opposite effect.

Emboldened by the support of former President Fidel V. Ramos, Ms Arroyo spurned the call, even insinuating that Aquino's and the others' efforts to make her step down undermined the country's democratic foundations.

All three—Aquino, Ramos and Ms Arroyo—were beneficiaries of two "people power" revolutions that led to the ousting of Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 and Joseph Estrada in 2001.

Deedee Siytangco, Aquino's spokesperson, said the Lady in Yellow had no personal motive in making such a call.

"It was her (Ms Arroyo's) prerogative to listen to it. Maybe she thought Cory was wrong. It was friendly advice [but] maybe it hurt," Siytangco told the INQUIRER.

She stressed that the former President "always decides independently after ... prayers."

Aquino was merely after preserving the gains of democracy, Siytangco added.

Divided Church

Bayan Muna Rep. Satur Ocampo, a former communist leader who had staunchly fought Marcos, said the Cory magic didn't work this time because her main constituency—the Roman Catholic Church—was split over the GMA-resign issue.

Although the Catholic Bishops Conference of the Philippines said Sunday that its collective decision was not to demand Ms Arroyo's resignation, several bishops had earlier made clear only her stepping down would end the political turmoil.

Ocampo also said the presence of the late Jaime Cardinal Sin in Edsa I and II was a "big factor" in the Cory magic.

No one like Sin

"Over the last two years, the CBCP had no significant voice because its president, Archbishop Fernando Capalla, had been very quiet [on political issues]. There was no very effective intervention of someone like Sin.

Someone from the CBCP has yet to emerge to become its rallying figure, who will take a clear-cut position on the issue," said Ocampo.

Former Sen. Rene Saguisag said he still had high respect for Aquino even after they parted ways in 2001.

As Aquino's spokesperson and legal counsel during her presidency, Saguisag was one of those who had felt the glow of the Cory magic, seeing it work in the battle against Marcos.

The legal eagle disagreed with Aquino during the Edsa II uprising against Estrada, and he now finds himself lawyering for the deposed President.

Tired of people power

Explaining why Aquino's call did not fly, Saguisag said: "Things have changed. There's the people power fatigue and the uncertainties over Noli de Castro and a possible military junta in the offing."

"I don't know what goes on in the minds of the people. *Pero nadala na ang tao* (The people have been burned). They don't want to support any action outside the rule of law," he said.

Saguisag said the people's hesitation to support Aquino this time was brought about by the "fake" Edsa II, in which Aquino, Ramos, Sin and Ms Arroyo rode the same boat to sink Estrada's presidency.

He insisted that there were only two genuine "people power" revolts—Edsa I and the 1997 huge rally, led by Aquino, which forced Ramos, who was then pushing for Charter change supposedly to extend his term of office, to back down.

Told that Aquino this time did not specifically call for another Edsa and, in fact, had said she was too old to lead another "people power," Saguisag said the only logical explanation for Ms Arroyo's insistence in clinging to her post was that "she does not want to share company with Estrada and comparing notes on what went wrong."

Knowing when to leave

"The magic is there but it won't work because it's a question of survival on the part of the President," Saguisag said, noting Sen. Joker Arroyo's observation that Ms Arroyo had to stay in power to avert a scenario where "two presidents will be jailed."

"She is putting her personal survival above the national interest ... But the problem with her is she does not know that it's time to go. It's important to know when to arrive, and even more important when to leave."

Saguisag added: "But it's hard to leave when there are some who are still applauding. It's the most painful thing to leave when no one is applauding anymore."

Unsure about Noli

Ocampo also noted that Aquino specifically did not call for people power.

"She rejected the very [political vehicle that] caused her ascension to power," he said.

He speculated that the former President did not ask the people to go to Edsa because they might not heed such a call in the first place.

"The people may not respond because the issues have not really sunk into the consciousness of Filipinos. People are not ready [for another Edsa], which is further exacerbated by uncertainties over Noli, which further held back the people," said Ocampo.

Asked if Aquino might have been manipulated by some politicians to adopt a move that would boost the political future of her son, Rep. Benigno "Noynoy" Aquino III, he said: "Off-hand, that's a very important factor."

The Noynoy factor could have weakened Aquino's call because it had become subject to speculation, said Sen. Richard Gordon, a member of the majority coalition.

Clash among the elite

Gordon said what had occurred was not a fight between the masses and the ruling elite, but a case of "power grab" involving the elite itself, who still control much of the country's political and economic levers.

"It's an issue involving the elite, the power grabbers. It is a case of the opposition led by former administration officials and wannabes, supported by the other side (Left), but this is not understandable to the masses," he said.

Gordon said that even if Aquino had made such a call for another revolt, people would not have come out in droves. Unlike the two Edsas, he said, there were no common enemies and acceptable alternatives this time.

Dagger in democracy's heart

He said that what dealt a fatal blow to the Marcos rule was the killing of Aquino's spouse, former Sen. Ninoy Aquino, in 1983 and the walkout staged by poll officials in the fraud-marred snap election called by Marcos.

"The two events struck like a dagger at the heart of democracy," said Gordon.

"There was a walkout and a killing. And she (Aquino) was the alternative, an acceptable one. In 2001, it was clear that close associates of President Estrada received huge payoffs. The lifestyle shown was not acceptable to the middle class and ABC classes who were part of the leadership of both movements. In both instances, the issues were clearly understandable to the masses."

Gordon said Aquino was now saying that the people should not wait for constitutional processes to finish.

Who will draw sword?

"I still have admiration for her ... until she made that resign call," Gordon said, adding that the attempt to force the President to step down added an "intimidation factor" to the situation.

Even Estrada was given his day in court, he said.

"This is her (Aquino's) Constitution. She made this one. If we are to become a real democracy, the processes must be followed ... which guarantee the rights of the people to seek redress of grievances," said Gordon.

He added: "The country has always been personalistic and based on patronage. The real challenge confronting the country is how to change. The real test of democracy is to ... embrace change."

Taguig-Pateros Rep. Alan Peter Cayetano said the Cory magic was defeated by "black magic forces because this administration will defend democracy at all cost. Translation: it will use anything in its arsenal to prevent GMA from stepping down."

Cayetano likened the Philippines to the mythical kingdom of Camelot ruled by King Arthur.

"Due to the wars of spells, the kingdom is destroyed," he said. "The king's mystical sword, the Excalibur, is now buried in a stone waiting for its rightful holder so that order will be restored once again. But who can draw the sword?"

Cory unfazed by CBCP stand

**By Cynthia D. Balana
and Christine O. Avendaño**

FORMER President Corazon Aquino yesterday stood firm on her call for President Macapagal-Arroyo to step down, unfazed by the refusal of Roman Catholic bishops to join the clamor.

Aquino also said she was prepared to accept all criticisms against her and her family for taking the decision, saying it was small price to pay for what her late husband, the assassinated former Sen. Benigno Aquino Jr., stood for.

Clad in a white blouse and white skirt, Aquino spoke during a "Mass for Peace and Renewal" organized and attended by students, faculty members, alumni and religious leaders at the De La Salle University chapel in Manila.

Aquino said she was moved by the homily of Bro. Armin Luistro, FSC, who defended the position taken by the De La Salle community to demand Ms Arroyo's resignation.

Luistro said the decision was "a calculated risk and a painful choice."

No shouting match

Asked by the INQUIRER about a supposed shouting match at Malacañang between her and Ms Arroyo last Thursday, Aquino said the meeting was cordial.

"Nothing like that happened. Yes, we met last Thursday, but there was no shouting. We just kissed each other goodbye," she said.

Presidential Management Staff chief Rigoberto Tiglao said Malacañang respected Ms Aquino but stressed that "nobody ... has a monopoly of the truth at this moment."

While calling Ms Aquino a "heroine" of democracy, Tiglao also referred to her sharply.

Intellectual dishonesty

"I think there are some elements of intellectual dishonesty here in that their very request to demand the President to resign is really an attempt to move other political forces to force the President to resign," Tiglao said in a television interview.

Municipal mayors called on Ms Arroyo to express support for her.

"We live in a democracy and everyone of us has the right to be heard but it does not mean that such [a resignation] call would be followed if people do not want to," Naval (Biliran) Mayor Gerry Espina, spokesperson for the 1,501-member-strong League of Municipalities of the Philippines, told reporters.

8 tourists nabbed for selling wares

By Leila B. Salaverria

BUREAU of Immigration (BI) agents have arrested eight Chinese tourists reportedly engaged in the retail business after their activities were exposed by their sales ladies who had also accused them of unfair labor practices.

BI commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr. said the aliens were also facing deportation proceedings for violating the conditions of their stay in the country as tourists by engaging in the retail business.

He added the arrests were an offshoot of complaints from the sales staff who worked for them, who said their employers made them work more than eight hours a day, paying them wages below the minimum.

The sales staff also said some of them had been fired when they failed to report for duty because they were sick. According to them, their Chinese bosses also refused to accept their illness as an excuse for missing work.

The BI identified the eight Chinese nationals as Rong Qing Rong, Zhuang Min Xin, Shi Liang Liang, Shi Yu Hong, Shi Kuan Kuan, Wang Chui Shi, Ye Jiang Chun and Qui Yu Qiong.

They were nabbed on July 4 while in the act of selling their goods at the Baclaran Mall in Parañaque City.

BI Associate Commissioner Teodoro Delarmente said the eight were not supposed to do business here because they were directly competing with Filipino retailers and robbing them of livelihood opportunities. "The retail trade is exclusively reserved for Filipinos," Delarmente said in a statement.

'Read Doble affidavit in Crame'

By DJ Yap

FORMER actress Laarni Enriquez and company may go to Camp Crame and "take a look" at intelligence agent T/Sgt. Vidal Doble's affidavit, which had implicated them in the "Gloriagate" scandal, but no copies would be given to them, a lawyer told a Quezon City court yesterday.

The case is still under investigation, so Enriquez and her companions are not yet considered respondents entitled to documents pertaining to the case, said lawyer Thomas Laragan from the Office of the Solicitor General.

Enriquez, actor Rez Cortez, former Estrada Cabinet member Horacio "Boy" Morales, Angelito Santiago and Wilson Felix were named in Doble's affidavit claiming the intelligence agent had been paid to vouch for the authenticity of the "mother of all tapes" of former National Bureau of Investigation official Samuel Ong.

Laragan was responding to a petition by Enriquez's camp at a hearing yesterday in a Quezon City regional trial court. The petitioners had asked the court to block an investigation unless they were furnished copies of Doble's affidavit, which he had submitted to the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG).

The group had been subpoenaed earlier by the CIDG, which was looking for probable cause for the filing of inciting to sedition and serious illegal detention charges against them.

Enriquez's lawyer Rufus Rodriguez said the refusal of police to give them copies of the affidavit had prevented them from countering Doble's allegations and possibly charging him with perjury.

Rodriguez asked Quezon City Regional Trial Court Branch 215 Judge Ma. Luisa Padilla to issue a temporary restraining order on the police investigation of the cases. He also said the petitioners were being denied their constitutional right to due process.

Rodriguez said they were willing to withdraw their petition if the CIDG furnished them copies of Doble's affidavit. The lawyer added that the petitioners were being tried by publicity, citing news reports of Doble's allegations at a press conference on June 17.

Cory Aquino has lost her magic

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

WHEN former President Cory Aquino went on national television and called on President Macapagal-Arroyo to resign, many thought that was the nail that sealed GMA's coffin.

Crowds of the Edsa I and Edsa II magnitude were expected to gather at the historic avenue to bring down GMA.

But no such thing happened.

Of course, there was a handful of people led by defeated presidential candidate Brother Eddie Villanueva at Edsa after Cory's speech, but they made a nuisance of themselves as they caused traffic on the main artery of the metropolis.

Cory has lost her magic.

The once most revered woman has lost her credibility.

The widow of the late Sen. Benigno "Ninoy" Aquino had the temerity to urge Ms Arroyo to step down to solve the country's woes when she couldn't even solve the problems of Hacienda Luisita that her family owns.

Hacienda Luisita was the scene of carnage a few months ago when policemen and soldiers shot down striking workers and tenants.

People know Hacienda Luisita was spared from being placed under the Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Program (CARP) during Cory's term.

Although many refused to believe it before, many people now realize that at the height of the lahar rampage in the early 1990s, public works officials diverted the path of lahar to other places.

The reason? To save Hacienda Luisita from devastation during Cory's term.

As a result, the town of Bacolor in Pampanga became the catch basin of lahar.

Ms Aquino's perceived bad governance led to several coup attempts.

Defense Secretary Fidel V. Ramos stood by Cory as he stood by President GMA at the most critical hours over the weekend.

Unlike Ms Arroyo, *Tita* Cory was an 8 a.m.-to-5 p.m. President.

After office hours, she hurried to her *amigas* to play mahjong.

People also came to know about that after her term.

The only thing that Cory did well during her term was playing a stage mother to daughter Kris, who was a budding actress at the time.

People can't help recalling the time she stopped a fist fight on Malacañang grounds between actors Richard Gomez and Robin Padilla.

The cause of the quarrel was Kris.

Tita Cory should face the reality that she's had her time.

* * *

Ms Arroyo had better take the advice of one of her predecessors, FVR, to call for the convening of a constitutional convention or a constituent assembly formed out of the two houses of Congress.

The need of the hour is Charter change.

The country must shift from presidential to a parliamentary-federal form of government.

The parliamentary form of government would eliminate the use of the so-called "People Power," a method used with alarming frequency by those who would like to change the national leadership.

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5th National Student Art Competition

Lumang Samahan, Bagong Kahulugan

The country's most popular youth contest - ArtPetron 5: **National Student Art Competition** - is here! This year's theme ***Lumang Samahan, Bagong Kahulugan*** - invites you to remember and revisit the **most important relationships and partnerships you have had in your lifetime. Could it be a most memorable relationship with a loving parent? Or is it a wonderful friendship with a teacher or a friend?** Whatever it is, immortalize it! Paint it in oil or water color or photograph it in colored film! Join ArtPetron's 5th year and be part of this season's search for the paintings and photos featuring your most unforgettable relationship!

OFFICIAL ENTRY FORM

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The painting/photography competition is open to all Filipino college students and students of art/photography whether in a university program or a tutorial or museum-based painting or photography class. Age bracket of participants is limited to 15-28 years old only.

Application forms are available from all colleges, universities, participating Petron Service Centers, bulk plants and offices nationwide, or at the Project Secretariat c/o Studio 5 Designs, 28 Paseo de Roxas corner Jupiter St., Bel-Air Village, Makati City. Telephone numbers are 8953971 or 8953975. A downloadable application form is available at our website: www.artpetron.com.

o Watercolor/Water-based Media
- The surface to be used for this category must be watercolor paper or illustration board.
- The size of the artwork must not be more than 4 ft. x 4 ft. (unframed).

o Oil/Acrylic
- The surface to be used for this category must either be canvas, canvas paper, or wood.
- The size of the artwork must not be more than 4 ft. x 4 ft. (unframed).

o Colored Photography
- The size of the artwork must not be smaller than 8 in. x 10 in. and must not exceed 10 in. x 15 in. (unframed)
- All entries must be original and must have been photographed after February 28, 2005. They must not have been previously exhibited or awarded a prize in another contest, corrected, or manipulated in any post production activity. Entrants must declare the type of camera used. Digital photography is allowed, filters may be used.

Entries may be submitted to Petron bulk plants (deadline is July 8, 2005); or to the Project Secretariat c/o Studio 5 Designs (deadline is July 18, 2005). Entries sent to the Project Secretariat via the standard registered package or by courier must be postmarked July 1, 2005.

All participants must submit the following documents:
- Brief curriculum vitae/bio-data
- 2"x2" colored ID photo with the applicants name on the back of the entry
- Sketch of the chosen relationship
- Brief description of the subject and why the artist chose it
- He/she must also declare whether some elements of his/her painting were copied or appropriated from a photograph, print or another artwork
- Fully answered questionnaire from ArtPetron
- Notarized affidavit certifying originality of entry
- Certification from school dean that participant is duly enrolled in his/her school as is claimed in application form

Six (6) first prize winners (three (3) from each Painting category) will receive Php 50,000 and a trophy made by National Artist and Chairman of the ArtPetron Board of Judges Napoleon V. Abueva. Six (6) runners-up (three (3) from each Painting Category) will receive Php 20,000 each and an ArtPetron trophy.

The Photography Category will have six (6) first prize winners who will receive Php 30,000 each and an ArtPetron trophy. Six (6) runners-up will receive Php 15,000 each and an ArtPetron trophy.

For full details and contest forms, please go to your nearest Petron service station or the office of the Project Secretariat (Studio 5 Designs) located at #28 Paseo de Roxas, Bel-Air Village, Makati, telephone nos. (02)8909318 or (02)8953971 You can also download the application form at **www.artpetron.com.**

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Court junks MMDA traffic scheme plea

By Tarra V. Quismundo
and DJ Yap

THE MAKATI Regional Trial Court (MRTC) has denied for lack of merit the Metropolitan Manila Development Authority (MMDA) appeal for reconsideration of an injunction issued in May against two traffic schemes.

The injunction was in response to a petition filed by nine transport groups.

MRTC Branch 145 Judge Cesar Santamaria reiterated his earlier ruling that the MMDA's Metropolitan Traffic Ticketing (MTT) scheme was illegal, and the No-Contact Traffic Apprehension (NCTA) scheme was unconstitutional.

No approval

The judge said the MTT was implemented without the approval of the Metro Manila Council (MMC), the agency's policy-making body.

Under the MTT, licenses of traffic violators were no longer confiscated but they had to pay their fines in Metrobank branches.

Moot

Santamaria said the Supreme Court's decision to consider moot a case against the MMDA for confiscating licenses of errant drivers because of the MTT, was not an indication of the scheme's validity.

MTT validity

"A careful examination of the case will show that there was no pronouncement [from the Supreme Court] as to the validity of the MTT," he added.

"It could not have been the position of the Supreme Court that the MTT, as issued alone by Chair Bayani Fernando and without the prior resolution and approval of the MMC, is legal and binding," the Makati judge said.

MMDA's failure to get the authority and consent of the MMC was also cited by the lower court in ruling against the NCTA, a scheme using video and still cameras to catch traffic violators on major thoroughfares.

Changes

In its appeal, the MMDA argued it had made some changes in the scheme, like giving violators five days to appeal their citation without paying fines.

But like the MTT, Santamaria said, "The amendment... was issued solely by Fernando," without the authority and consent of the MMC, and thus was not a valid amendment.

OBR 'lawful'

But the judge ruled against transport groups who questioned the Organized Bus Route (OBR) scheme, saying it was lawful as it had the MMC's approval.

MMDA General Manager Robert Nacianceno said yesterday the agency had yet to receive an official copy of the court resolution.

Another appeal

But MMDA legal services chief Emmanuel de Castro said the agency could again appeal the ruling.

"We would seek every remedy available... (like filing) an appeal before the Court of Appeals," he said.

De Castro said that pending receipt of the court's ruling, the MMDA would continue implementing the NCTA and MTT.

Murder charges

Meanwhile, two MMDA operatives were charged with frustrated murder for allegedly hitting and stabbing a peanut vendor during a clearing operation in Quezon City.

Ferdinand Gonzales, 35, filed the complaint in the office of the Quezon City prosecutor against a certain Richard Aquino and an operative identified only as "Villegas."

The vendor, who sells peanuts, anchovies and dried squid for a living, said the incident occurred on July 1 when the MMDA was clearing the corner of Abra and Congressional Avenue in Barangay Bago Bantay of illegal vendors.

Empty bag

Gonzales alleged the MMDA people got hold of his cart loaded with goods when he tried to get his bag containing his earnings of about P2,000.

He said he saw that the bag was already empty.

Aquino, leader of the MMDA team, got irked and pointed his gun at him.

Gonzales tried to flee but the operatives caught him, hitting him on the head. He alleged Aquino then stabbed him.

When Gonzales' older brother Marcial tried to help, the MMDA operatives allegedly hit him, too.

Gonzales was taken to the Quezon City General Hospital for treatment of his injuries.

Mayor's help

In a related development, about 300 sidewalk vendors asked Quezon City Mayor Feliciano Belmonte Jr. yesterday to help stop MMDA's clearing operations that were allegedly marked by human rights abuses.

The vendors also sought the ouster of Fernando, saying they suffered from inhumane treatment from the agency's personnel involved in clearing operations.

Stab victim

Led by the Metro Manila Vendor's Alliance (MMVA) Quezon City chapter, the vendors cited the case of Gonzales who was allegedly stabbed by MMDA operatives during a clearing operation.

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Las Piñas women turn to mini ventures

By Jocelyn R. Uy

NO REASON to be idle for Las Piñas City women who are unable to find jobs in offices or factories.

A women's organization called the Kalipunan ng mga Liping Pilipina (Kalipi) had just been given P1 million by Las Piñas City Mayor Imelda Aguilar to boost Kalipi's various livelihood programs.

Kalipi is composed of 230 women's organizations. Its members, aged 18 to 59, come from poor communities in Las Piñas City.

Handy

"The donation would be handy in purchasing the necessary materials for our projects. Our members don't have the money, so this is very much welcome," said Kalipi coordinator Vivian Vasquez.

The money would also pay for the fees of instructors hired to train its 25,000 members for projects such as food processing, candle-making, sewing and haircutting.

The organization equips its members with expertise in food processing, enabling them to concoct their own recipes for *tocino*, *longganisa* and boneless *bangus*.

Orders

The members also make Filipino delicacies such as *puto-pao* and *kutsinta*, which are sold in their barangays, said Vasquez.

Members learn at least 21 menus per session which lasts four hours a day.

"Some customers order in bulk, especially when they like the product, so the earnings from sales are a welcome addition to the family kitty," Vasquez added.

Apart from food processing, members are also trained by experts in beauty parlor services. "They are provided with free haircutting supplies which they could use after their training," said Vasquez.

"The projects keep our women busy. Instead of staying idle or indulging in vices, they can embark on mini enterprises that can turn out to be profitable," she added.

Suspected robbers fall before pulling new heist

By Margaux C. Ortiz

THE WESTERN Police District (WPD) yesterday presented three men suspected of being involved in a series of holdup incidents in Metro Manila and nearby provinces.

The suspects were identified as Teodolfo Cañon, 27, a former armored van driver of Suns and Shield Security Agency Inc.; Joseph Puno, 39, a former security guard, and helper Armando Dente, 32.

WPD director Chief Supt. Pedro Bulaong said the suspects confessed that they were responsible for robbing Caloocan Foam Distributor; Caloocan Junk Shop; Baliuag Bulacan Chicken Delivery; Meralco-Muñoz-Edsa; Baliuag Jewelry and Pawnshop; Angeles Jewelry and Pawnshop; Tanduay Field Office, Boni Avenue, Mandaluyong City; Broadway Centrum Commercial Complex; Apalit Jewelry and Pawnshop; Navotas Solid Lines; Navotas Metrobank, and Coke Field Office located in Fairview, Quezon City.

The suspects, however, denied involvement in the recent Allied Bank robbery on P. Ocampo Street, Malate, Bulaong added.

Bulaong said WPD operatives arrested the suspects before they could stage another robbery along R-10 Road early last week.

Police said they received a call from a concerned citizen on July 3 informing them that a robbery was about to happen in the area.

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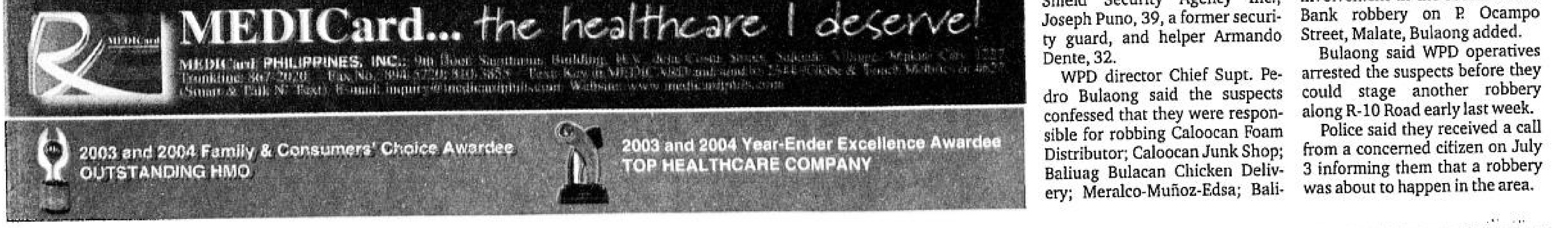
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Black not hitting the panic button

By Jasmine W. Payo

"IT'S just one game, there's no reason to panic."

This was how coach Norman Black took Ateneo's blowout of a loss to arch nemesis La Salle in the UAAP last Sunday.

But make no mistake about it, the multititled Philippine Basketball Association mentor was just as stunned by the unexpected rout.

"We're all disappointed," Black said emphatically. "We didn't expect it. We didn't see it coming. We have been practicing hard and doing well in the pre-season."

While many expected a typically tight contest between the long-time rivals, the Archers pulled off a surprising 18-point triumph, 78-60, over the Eagles after leading by as much as 33 points.

Ateneo looked intimidating at the start as the defending champion Archers fielded their smallest lineup in years. But the Archers relied on their offensive firepower with junior guard JV Casio drilling 12 of his 14 points beyond the arc.

"They were hitting us in the perimeter," said Black. "We didn't have time to cover them. It happened so quick like in a span of three minutes."

Black dismissed insinuations that the Eagles lacked composure. "They were able to handle the pressure," he said. "Nobody said they were nervous."

The Eagles mentor, however, noted a lot of things that didn't turn out as planned.

"We were not organized offensively," he assessed. "Defensively, we were losing our men, we were not pressuring well. Our second team didn't perform well."

Black also cited the 26 turnovers Ateneo committed, which La Salle converted into an enormous 35 points.

"We're going to study the tapes, find out what went wrong and correct our mistakes," he said.

Yet even if the multititled mentor is demanding a better performance from the Eagles, Black expects tougher games ahead.

"It was very interesting how it turned out," he said. "But this is not the only adversity we'll have this season."

FedEx-RP five battles Fukien

HONG KONG—FedEx-RP coach Johnny Tam yesterday said his wards are ready and confident on the eve of its match against China's Fukien at the start of the 14th Eastcolight Super Kung Sheung Cup international invitational basketball championship at the Queen Elizabeth Stadium here Tuesday.

Led by 16-year PBA veteran Jerry Codiñera and John Feriols, the Filipinos will take to the floor against the tall and young Chinese at 2 p.m., the first of four matches kicking of hostilities in the week-long, eight-team tournament organized by the Hong Kong Basketball Association.

Codiñera, a member of the PBA's 25 Greatest Players, is the most experienced player in the 10-man FedEx-RP team supported by the Basketball Association of the Philippines, Accel and Bestank.

Backing up Codiñera and Ferriols are Ranidel de Ocampo, Marc Pingris, Wynne Arboleda, Gary David, Bruce Dacia, Egay Billones, Mark Macapagal and Britt Reroma.

THE PROTAGONISTS: International badminton stars blow into town yesterday for the MVP Cup, the duel between the finest shuttlers from Asia and Europe. On hand to welcome them at the Naia were Philippine Badminton Association vice president Edgardo Aglipay (in barong tagalog) and IBF deputy president Datuk Punch Gunalan. ROGER MARGALLO

World's top shuttlers get going in MVP Cup

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THE PHILIPPINES, still longing to produce a badminton hero, gets to see the world's finest shuttlers starting today in the MVP Cup, the Asia vs Europe challenge, at the PhilSports Arena in Pasig.

The three-day slam-bang of a competition features the likes of Lin Dan of China, the world's No. 1 player, and Indonesia's Taufik Hidayat, the reigning Olympic champion—two of the brightest in the stellar array of international standouts.

Presented last night in a press conference at the Edsa Shangri-la, the 20 MVP Cup stars included the world No. 1 mixed doubles pair of Nathan Robertson and Gail Emms of Britain who will clash with the Philippines' Kennie and Kennevic Asuncion on the third and last day of the challenge.

A purse of $50,000 goes to the winning team and $30,000 to the loser.

Matches start at 7 p.m. today with Olympic champion Zhang Ning of China battling Mia Audina Tjiptawan of the Netherlands in the first women's singles.

Hidayat takes on Denmark's Anders Boesen in the first men's singles at 8:30 p.m., while Robertson and Robert Blair of England square off with Malaysia's Chan Chong Ming and Koo Kian Keat in the men's doubles at 10 p.m.

Others in the team are South Korea's Seo Yoon Hee, the No. 16 in women's singles and reputedly a giant-killer; Malaysia's Chang Chong Ming and Keat, the world No. 8 in men's doubles; Thailand's Saralee Thungthongkam and Sathinee Chankrachangwong, the world No. 5 in women's doubles.

Organizers said tickets priced from P50 (gallery) to P500 (special ringside) have been sold out.

Local badminton fans are expected to root for the Asians, although the Europeans are expected to put up a good fight.

Germany's Bjoern Joppien, the shuttler said to be too good for the world No. 17 ranking, banners Team Europe, along with the Robertson-Emms pair

Also playing for Europe are Pi Hongyan, a Chinese who now carries a French passport; Britain's doubles specialist Blair, and Yao Jie, another Chinese who now plays for the Netherlands.

"The plan is to hold the MVP Cup every year," said PLDT and Smart chair Manny V. Pangilinan, in whose honor the tournament is being held.

Pangilinan sees a stronger Filipino participation in the event in the future as tournament participation is not entirely based on rankings.

Asked which team he would root for, the businessman-sportsman said: "I will go for Team Philippines."

Also attending the dinner were officials of sponsors like the INQUIRER Badminton Monthly, represented by Philippine Daily Inquirer chair Marixi Prieto and president Sandy Prieto-Romualdez, Bingo Bonanza, Nokia, JVC, Yonex, Solar Sports, Discovery Suites and the Philippine Star.

STAR-STUDDED ROSTERS

THE BEST of Asia battles the finest from Europe. But just how good are the players seeing action in the MVP Cup?

Asia, the hotbed of badminton, will parade in the men's singles **Lin Dan** of China and **Taufik Hidayat**, the world's No. 1 player and the reigning Olympics champion, respectively.

Lin has won seven of the last 12 IBF Grand Prix events and has amassed 59 titles. The 21-year-old has lost only once against a European player while steering China to the Thomas Cup and the recent Sudirman Cup where he won, incidentally, over Hidayat.

On the other hand, Hidayat is easily the most recognized international player in the bunch being the Olympic champion. He helped Indonesia to the 1998 and 2000 Thomas Cup.

Since 1997, Hidayat has won at least 20 titles. He has played in the Philippines before, losing to Lin in the 2001 JVC Asian championships.

Their counterparts in the European team are no pushovers either.

Germany's **Bjoern Joppien** has boosted his country from nowhere to No. 5 in Europe behind Denmark, England, The Netherlands and Sweden. He is ranked No. 17 in the world.

The other European singles player, **Andres Boesen** of Denmark, has represented his country in two Thomas and Uber Cup finals, four European Championships, three World Championships and one Sudirman Cup.

A grudge match is in the offing in the women's singles between China's **Zhang Ning** and The Netherlands' **Mia Audina Tjiptawan**. They met for the first time in the Uber Cup finals in 1994 with Audina winning. They have since traded victories until the Athens Olympics last year, where Zhang defeated Audina for the gold.

Zhang is presently the world No. 3 and has won five tournaments in the past 18 months. She has also made the semifinals in 10 of her last 11 tourneys.

Seo Yoon Hee of South Korea will be her backup for Team Asia. Ranked No. 16 in the world, Hee took the international stage by storm after downing France's **Pi Hongyan** in Athens.

Hongyan is the brightest star in Europe the last two years, winning the silver medal in the 2004 Euro Championships after bowing to Audina in the finals. The world No. 3 has won the 2004 Dutch Open and the 2005 Swiss Open.

Audina is another "imported" European talent, having been born in Indonesia which she helped win the silver medal in the 1996 Atlanta Olympics.

Ranked No. 17 in the world, Audina is the current European champ in both singles and doubles. She also won the 2005 Yonex Japan Open.

The Philippines' mixed doubles pair of **Kennie and Kennievic Asuncion**, ranked No. 24 in the world, will battle the world No. 1 in **Nathan Robertson** and **Gail Emms**.

Robertson and Emms go into the event with a long list of triumphs in the IBF circuit, including the All-England and Swiss opens. They also won the silver in the Athens Olympics. *Marc Anthony Reyes*

Surging Dolphins, Cards share lead with Knights

By Jasmine W. Payo

GAMES TOMORROW
(Cuneta Astrodome)
11:30 a.m.—San Beda vs SSC (Jrs)
2 p.m.—San Beda vs SSC (Srs)
4 p.m.—Perpetual Help vs JRU (Srs)
6 p.m.—Perpetual Help vs JRU (Jrs)

HE may have earned the ire of his coach, but the Philippine Christian U Dolphins still turned to Gabby Espinas for leadership.

Espinas delivered a season-high 27 points, 18 rebounds and three blocks to lift the defending champions past the Jose Rizal U Bombers, 68-51, yesterday in the NCAA basketball tournament at the Cuneta Astrodome.

"His attitude has improved, he just needs to be reminded regularly," said coach Junel Baculi, who a day earlier cited Espinas' tendency to lose focus.

The Dolphins streaked to their fourth straight win to join the Letran Knights on top.

The Mapua Cardinals also kept pace with the two leaders at 4-0 after thwarting the University of Perpetual Help Altas, 67-62.

"At crunch time, we played composed basketball," said coach Horacio Lim after the Cardinals overcame the Altas' three-point barrage in the clutch.

Senior swingman Joferson Gonzales led the Cardinals' balanced offense with 14 points.

Perpetual Help, last year's runner-up, and JRU absorbed their fourth straight setback.

Espinas and Jason Castro turned the Dolphins' precarious 32-31 lead into a 46-36 cushion.

The Bombers tried to stage brief rallies behind Floyd Dedicatoria, but Espinas teamed up with Ramon Retaga to widen the gap, 64-47.

In junior play, Raycon Kabigting shot 23 points as the Light Bombers clinched their second win in three games by outclassing the Baby Dolphins, 87-72.

The senior scores:

First Game

MAPUA 67—Gonzales 14, Tiongco 11, Dela Peña 9, Pascual 9, Del Rosario 8, Veranga 7, Sumalinog 5, Gorospe 2, Mazo 2, Co 0, Migraso 0.

PERPETUAL 62—Misa 15, Joe 12, Refuerzo 11, Bauzon 10, Racho 6, Balboa 6, Apor 2, Mendoza 0, Manalang 0.

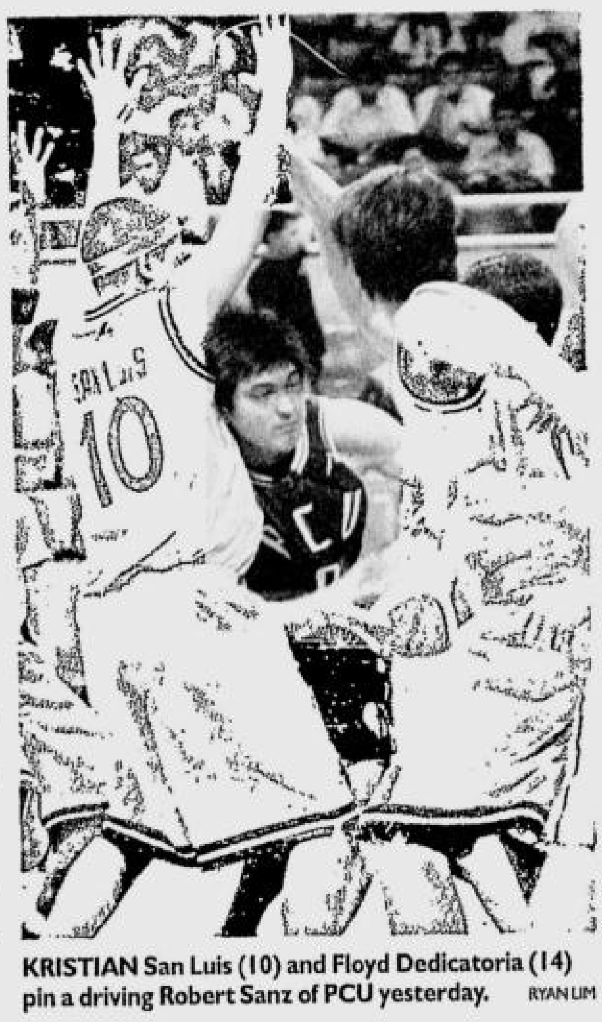
Quarters: 17-9, 35-22, 52-41, 67-62

Second Game

PCU 68—Espinas 27, Retaga 13, Castro 9, Solis 7, Belga 5, Cecilia 3, Sanz 2, Amparado 0, Garrido 0.

JRU 51—Dedicatoria 12, Jorge 10, Tala 8, Golena 7, Mañego 7, Domancas 4, Japson 3, Sena 0, Reyes 0, Natividad 0, San Luis 0, Yuzon 0.

Quarters: 14-15, 28-29, 46-36, 68-51



KRISTIAN San Luis (10) and Floyd Dedicatoria (14) pin a driving Robert Sanz of PCU yesterday. RYAN LIM

Philsoc turns to PSC for cash relief

By Musong R. Castillo

THE PHILIPPINE Southeast Asian Games Organizing Committee only has P60 million cash, less than five months before the 23rd SEAG kicks off in Manila and three other cities in the country.

With the P300 million pledged by President Macapagal-Arroyo still to be released, the Philsoc has sought help from the Philippine Sports Commission in funding the refurbishing of the dilapidated Rizal Memorial track and field oval.

PSC commissioner Richie Garcia, also the Sports and Venues chair of the Philsoc, clarified that the money being used to repair the oval is non-government fund.

Garcia, together with PSC chair William "Butch" Ramirez, made the clarification to deny a report (not in the INQUIRER) accusing the government agency of not going through the legal process in granting the contract for the Rizal oval repairs.

"The money used is non-government," Garcia said. "We (PSC) advanced the amount while awaiting the release (of the P300 million) from the Department of Budget and Management."

Fitting reward for Beermen

San Miguel's reliance on its aging mainstays pays off

By June Navarro

SAN MIGUEL Beer is reaping the fruits of its patience in keeping the core of the highly successful team that won five titles from 1999 to 2001.

With veterans Danny Ildefonso and Olsen Racela pulling off key plays down the wire, the Beermen regained their old place of prominence Sunday night by clinching the Gran Matador PBA Fiesta Conference title at the expense of the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals.

"We don't want the team to break up," said Ildefonso in Filipino, after grabbing the Finals MVP award following the Beermen's 91-87 win in Game 5 of the best-of-seven series.

"We wanted this title badly to prove that this team still has what it takes to win championships," added the league's only back-to-back season MVP (2000-2001) in the last 10 years.

With Racela and Danny Seigle not getting any younger, Ildefonso felt that management was prepared to overhaul the team to keep pace with the youth-filled opposition.

Sources said Racela, the Beermen's cerebral point guard for over half a decade, has been getting feelers to try his hand at coaching. Seigle, the league's top local scorer, has been injury-prone in recent seasons.

But after winning the 17th overall crown for the Beermen, the Ildefonso-Racela-Seigle trio plus Dorian Peña and Nic Belasco proved that their old magic is still there.

"The key in this championship was the desire of the players to win," said coach Jong Uichico, who captured his sixth PBA title to move alongside Tommy Manotoc in fourth place among the league's winningest coaches.

"There was a time when we're down but the players didn't think that way and fought until the end," added Uichico, recalling Talk 'N Text's 10-point lead in the third quarter of Game 5.

Dondon Hontiveros, who won his first PBA crown, and import Ace Custis also played key roles in the series for SMB while pinch-hitters Anton Villoria and Francis Adriano shared quality time for the Beermen.

Custis was actually a standby import until Chris Burgess got injured in the semifinals.

"Ace was really on reserve and there's no plan of replacing Chris until he got hurt in the semis," said Uichico. "But despite the import change, I still consider ourselves underdogs with Asi (Taulava) around."

There were questions raised about Talk 'N Text's persistence in fielding Taulava in the Finals. Many believed Taulava disrupted the team's system, which had brought the Phone Pals to the No. 1 spot in the elimination round.

But whether Taulava's return proved to be a bane for the Phone Pals is the least of the Beermen's concerns. They're back on top and that's what matters most.

SWEET 17: Olsen Racela and Danny Ildefonso (partly hidden behind Racela) celebrate San Miguel Beer's 17th PBA championship with supporters. RYAN LIM

Cavite five starts hot, rips Iloilo Warriors

GAME TODAY
(San Luis Sports Complex, Sta. Cruz, Laguna)
6 p.m.—Laguna Spring vs Iloilo Warriors

CAVITE got back on the winning track Sunday by blasting the visiting Iloilo Warriors, 81-70, in the 2005 Panasonic-NBC national basketball championship at the Pasay Sports Complex.

The Far Eastern Insurance-backed Cavite cagers led from start to finish en route to their sixth win in 11 outings.

The Warriors fell to 1-5 in the tournament backed by Panasonic, Sulpicio Lines, Cebu Pacific, Spring Cooking Oil, Accel, Molten, Nature's Spring, Far Eastern Insurance, Skygo Motorcycles, Sirlitz Solutions Provider, Hapee Toothpaste, Dewfoam, KSK Food Products (Boy Bawang), Bayview Park Hotel and Holiday Plaza-Cebu.

Blistering offensive

The Insurers of Bacoor Vice Mayor Edwin Malvar and strong supporter Gov. Ireneo "Ayong" Maliksi jumped to a 26-10 lead after 10 minutes and never looked back as Edward Attunaga, Marvin Ortiguerra and ex-FEU Tamaraw Jay Sierra went on a blistering offensive.

Eduardo Allado Jr. and 6-foot-5 West Negros College standout Ruel Balgos mounted a rally for the Warriors, but the closest they got of the Insurers was a 75-67 in the last two minutes.

Spring favored

Action continues today with Spring Cooking Oil-backed Laguna seeking its third win in five games against the Warriors of IBL president Robert Uy and Gov. Niel Tupas at the San Luis Sports Complex in Sta. Cruz, Laguna.

The Spring Oil Masters of NBC president Nathaniel "Tac" Padilla and Gov. Teresita "Ningning" Lazaro are favored in the 6 p.m. contest.

The scores:

CAVITE 81—Attunaga 24, Ortiguerra 22, Sierra 14, Abadia 9, Rodriguez 5, Mamaclay 2, Piodo 2, Hernandez 2, Codamon 1, Camanag 0, Mopera 0, Panares 0, Aguilar 0.

ILOILO 70—Balgos 18, Allado 13, Senierez 12, Poral 8, Leonida 8, Arceno 6, Manuel 3, Almonte 2, Penesa 0, Sencil 0, Sina-on 0.

Quarters: 26-10, 47-34, 68-52, 81-70.

O'Hair, reluctant golfer, nails 1st Tour win

TORONTO—American Sean O'Hair, who was pushed, prodded and bullied to become a professional golfer by his father, claimed his maiden US PGA Tour win at the John Deere Classic on Sunday in Silvis, Illinois.

O'Hair, who will turn 23 on Monday, fired a flawless final-round six-under 65 to finish on 16-under 268 at the TPC at Deere Run for a one-shot victory.

His reward is a place at next week's British Open as the top non-exempt finisher.

Americans Hank Kuehne (68) and Robert Damron (67) finished one shot back at 15-under 269 with compatriot Wes Short Jr. (66), overnight leader JL Lewis (72) and defending champion Mark Hensby (64) of Australia one stroke further adrift.

A PGA Tour rookie, O'Hair holed a nervy 5-foot par putt on the last and then watched from the scorer's hut as Lewis collapsed over the final two holes.

AMERICAN Sean O'Hair pumps his fist after scoring his maiden win. AFP

Lewis, who held a three-shot advantage when the day began, was tied for the lead with two holes to play but a bogey-bogey finish left the 1999 winner with a one-over 72.

Kuehne had a chance to force a playoff but his 20-foot putt from just off the green fell short.

"Going into the week I was lost, I didn't feel comfortable with my swing," said O'Hair.

"I went to book store and bought books I was so lost.

"I thought of something, worked on it in hotel room, went out and hit the ball pretty well."

Asked if he would accept the British Open invitation, O'Hair said: "I'll tell you what, that's going to be a very difficult decision for me.

"I don't do things based upon my career, I do things based upon my family, and I don't know if that's going to work out for me and my family.

"I want to go. I want to go more than anything. Will I go? I'm not sure yet . . . that's a decision to be made pretty quickly.

"I have no passport. I just thought about that."

If O'Hair turns down the invitation the spot will go to Germany's Bernhard Langer.

Hensby mounted a determined final-day charge, his 64 including five birdies in his first seven holes.

Todd Hamilton will head to St. Andrews for the defense of his British Open crown on a positive note, returning a final-round three-under 68 to post his best result this season in a tie for 13th at 11-under 273.

Reuters

Fiery Coseteng notches sweep in Touring Car races

ROSARIO, Batangas—Defending champion Jody Coseteng swept both races in Sunday's third leg of the 2005 Petron National Touring Car Championship at the Batangas Racing Circuit to bolster his bid for a fourth straight championship.

Coseteng pulled away early from the pack and never looked back to finish the 12-lap morning race in 33:24.669. He completed the sweep with a time of 27:30.235 in the afternoon race, punctuated by the fastest laptime of 1:54.744.

The San Miguel Beer ace driver hiked his total to 87 points in the series sanctioned by the Automobile Association of the Philippines and sponsored by Petron Ultron, Toyota Motors Phils., Norkis Yamaha, Kilton Motors, Denso, MOF Company and Pilipinas Shell.

Philip Alvendia of A3 Motorsports-Malayan Automaster National Touring Team finished second in both races despite racing for the first time in this year's series.

Alvendia started third in the morning race but leaned on the fastest time of 1:55.030 in the ninth lap to finish just 0.646 second off Coseteng and ahead of Dominic Bon.

Alvendia rallied from fourth in the afternoon race to claim second place behind Coseteng and ahead of Oscar Aguilar and Bon.

Renan Morales swept both the Junior Touring Car races over Bosch-Intelco's Bingo Valero.

Sharing the limelight were winners Nico Montinola in Class A, Jan de la Merced in Class B and Eric Banogon in Class C.

RACING TIPS

AT SANTA ANA BY MR. 999

Race 1—1. My Little Pet 2. Mini Skirt 3. Friendly Lover 4. Trader's Choice
Race 2—1. Material Maker/Conquer D Sun 2. Trieste 3. Hellfire 4. Chariot of Fire 5. Speed Machine
Race 3—1. Manila's Smile 2. Million Dollar 3. Fabiola/Sound Value 4. Straight Free
Race 4—1. Men of Honor 2. Fancy Dancer 3. Jaw Breaker 4. Yours Truly
Race 5—1. Inca 2. Princess Kim 3. Yanong Rikit 4. Extreme Power 5. Hepburn
Race 6—1. Holy King 2. Nitty Gritty 3. My Rabbonnie 4. Mercurian
Race 7—1. Stradivarius 2. Perfect Time 3. Shaolin 4. Queen's Gold 5. Best in Class
Race 8—1. I Remain 2. Secret Angel 3. Prophet 4. Mano Po 5. Hector's Dream 6. Red Anya

Kudos to MVP Cup

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

THE SAN Miguel Beermen were so balanced and organized I saw no reason why they'd not prevail over the Talk 'N Text Phone Pals on Sunday.

Jong Uichico's move to bring in Ace Custis as replacement for Chris Burgess was brilliant. Custis was just what the doctor had ordered, so to speak. He keyed Jong's wondrous dream of winning his sixth PBA title in nine championship stints.

Jong's 4-1 triumph in the best-of-seven Gran Matador title series was just as equally superb. And yes, that TNT victory in Game 3 merely delayed the inevitable.

As I said, the return of Asi Taulava did more harm than good for TNT. He was the baggage that pulled TNT down the gutter. TNT was doing all right until "The Rock" was recalled to active duty. You can't toss in a new ingredient midway into a cooking demo. It will just spoil the broth.

Let this be a lesson to anyone becoming too greedy.

***

THAT was rude. I never expected Norman Black to absorb that kind of welcome in the UAAP.

His setback by a rout, 78-60, in his very first game as Ateneo coach had come as a big surprise, especially with the way he lost his maiden game (La Salle's margin had reached 30 points several times). He was thoroughly pulverized, beaten black and blue, by no less than his former San Miguel Beer player, Franz Pumaren.

Pumaren suddenly became the teacher to his former teacher in capturing his 100th victory in his eighth season as La Salle coach.

I know Ateneo sorely missed gunner Larry Fonacier. But then, La Salle also lost Mac Cardona, who skipped his last year of eligibility to join the PBA draft this year.

I guess Black, a former PBA Grand Slam winner with SMB, still has this hangover of coaching the professional ranks. In contrast, Pumaren has been so used to amateur coaching for almost a decade now, an advantage he exploited to the hilt in humbling Black.

In their return bout, Black should know better. It is, therefore, almost imperative for Black to defeat Pumaren the next time around or he'll be the scorn of the Ateneo community—if not possibly lose his coaching job should he fail to win the crown.

A tall order, if you ask me.

***

THE NERVES got in the way. That partly explains the semifinal loss absorbed by Marlon Manalo in the World Pool Championships in Kaohsiung, Taiwan, on Saturday, at the hands of Chinese Wu Chia-ching, who is huge and hefty for his age of 16 years.

Manalo, 27, missed some easy shots against Wu as the law of averages also finally caught up with the Filipino. Manalo was the only player in the 160-man field who strung up 25 racks, beating two opponents by 10-0 and 11-0 shutouts en route to the quarterfinals.

But mainly, though, luck also helped Wu beat Manalo. When Wu missed a 7-ball late into the match, the ball uncannily disappeared in an undesignated hole to the chagrin of Manalo. That was the turning point as it triggered Wu's runaway 11-5 victory.

Wu went on to clinch the crown, rallying from 12-16 in beating compatriot Kuo Pocheng, 17-16. But if it's any consolation, Manalo took home $20,000.

Not bad, especially in these times of want and economic instability.

***

HERE'S a glass to MVP. For bringing in the world's cream of the crop in badminton, that's a class act unprecedented in our history.

From today up to July 14, Manny V. Pangilinan will parade the best shuttlers from Asia and Europe at the PhilSports Arena in what is now known as the MVP Cup. Together with PLDT's high velocity broadband Internet myDSL, Smart, Bingo Bonanza, Nokia, JVC, Yonex Sunrise, and a host of other supporters, the MVP Cup will showcase a superb array of badminton players from 11 countries.

In town are no less than the Athens Olympics champion Taufik Hidayat and Olympiad female gold medalist Zhang Ning. Also here are world No. 1 Lin Dan and German sensation Bjoern Joppien.

Our own Kennevic and Kennie Asuncion will be finally tested by the world No. 1 mixed doubles pair of Nathan Robertson and Gail Emms. Tickets are from P50 to P500 at TicketWorld tel. 8919999 or log on to www.mypad.net/mvpcup2005.

See you there.

SPORTSWATCH

No. 1 mixed doubles pair to hold free clinic

BRITAIN'S world No. 1 mixed doubles tandem of Nathan Robertson and Gail Emms will hold a free badminton clinic tomorrow at the Atrium, ground level of SM Megamall in Mandaluyong City. Robertson and Emms arrived yesterday to see action as part of the Europe team in the MVP Badminton Cup which fires off today at the PhilSports Arena in Pasig City. The British pair, silver medalists in the 2004 Athens Olympics and champion in last year's Swiss and All-England opens, will be presented to the media at 2 p.m. during a press conference sponsored by Carlton, which is exclusively distributed in the Philippines by Dunlop Slazenger International Inc. Other activities lined up for Robertson and Emms are store visits to Sportshouse, Toby's, Chris Sports and Olympic Village, autograph signing and photo sessions with badminton enthusiasts.

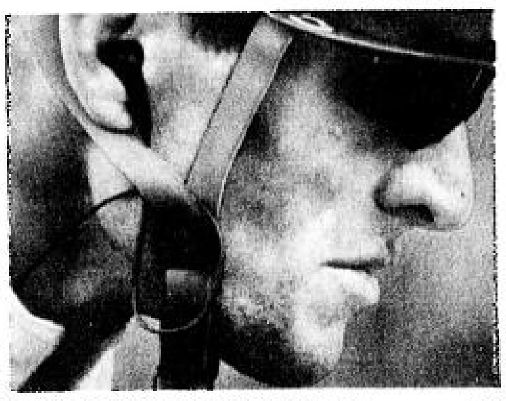
Loyola, De Guzman top Talion's Cup golf

LAWYERS Emil Loyola and Garry de Guzman won low gross and low net honors, respectively, in the 5th Talion's Cup at Villamor Golf Club course recently. Other winners in the tournament co-sponsored by Lex Talionis Fraternitas Inc. and the San Beda Law Golf Club were Harry Paltongan in Class A, Jun Baldovino in Class B, Chito Ruiz in Class C, Gen. Jose Lalisan in guest Class A over Renie Floro, and Felomino Balbin in guest Class B over Jose Noel Paulino. Bobby Doller and Benjie Chy finished second and third, respectively, to Paltongan in Class A while Justice Jose Catral Mendoza and Chito Fajardo settled for runner-up honors in members' Class B. Ruiz towed Nick Lazaro and Ronnie Ortile in Class C. Anro Tercero topped the longest drive contest on hole No. 9, Paeng Dy had the most accurate drive on the same hole, and Emil Loyola was nearest to the pin on No. 17.

Speedo age-group triathlon slated in Clark

THE FIFTH leg of the annual Speedo-National Age Group Triathlon (NAGT) series takes place on July 17 at the Clearwater Resort and Country Club inside the Clark Economic Zone in Pampanga with about 100 age groupers from Luzon and Metro Manila expected to participate. A major component of the developmental program of the Triathlon Association of the Philippines (TRAP), this year's series is also supported by PowerBar, David's Salon and Day's Spa, Stronghold Insurance and Asian Centre for Insulation Phils. The TRAP also staged earlier this year the NAGT legs in Davao City, Cebu, Caliraya, Laguna, and the Hundred Islands in Pangasinan. The last two legs are scheduled in Cagayan de Oro on Sept. 18 and at Ayala Alabang Village on Oct. 23. "We are happy to be part of TRAP's developmental program because this gives us the opportunity to showcase the facilities of our country club resort," said Richard Hallewick, Country GM of Clearwater. Registration will end on July 16, according to TRAP president Tom Carrasco Jr. Entry fee is P500 inclusive of a finisher's T-shirt and a buffet breakfast at Clearwater. Late registrants will be charged P600.

Armstrong surrenders yellow jersey to Voigt


ARMSTRONG: Calculated move AFP

MULHOUSE, France—The day after his teammates crumbled, Lance Armstrong surrendered. But it was a calculated move designed to make the coming days easier to manage.

Armstrong relinquished the Tour de France leader's yellow jersey on Sunday's ninth stage, allowing Team CSC rider Jens Voigt to ride away in pursuit of stage winner Mickael Rasmussen on the 171-kilometer (106.3-mile) route from Gerardmer to Mulhouse in eastern France.

Rasmussen won the first Tour stage win of his career, while Voigt took the overall lead and pulled over two minutes clear of Armstrong in the overall standings.

"I felt like today (Sunday) might be the day when the jersey would be given away and it turned out it was," Armstrong said. "We don't need the yellow jersey. We don't need to keep it in the Alps, we need to have it at the end.

"Let's see how the race unfolds," he added. "The first priority is that the guys feel better and get their confidence back."

In contrast to Saturday's eighth stage—where Armstrong's teammates crumbled up a modest category 2 climb—things seemed back to normal Sunday.

The Discovery Channel squad sat at the front of the pack, taking turns to lead the American up the hardest climb of the Tour so far, a category 1 ascent up the famed Ballon d'Alsace.

Jan Ullrich, Alexandre Vinokourov and Andreas Kloeden—all of the T-Mobile team—cruised along just behind Discovery, conserving energy for the Alps, where they will attack Armstrong when the Tour resumes Tuesday.

Curiously, in the village before the start of the stage, the team buses—the sky-blue of Discovery and the bright pink of T-Mobile—faced each other across a road, offering a taste of challenges ahead.

"We were better than yesterday and that's good going into the rest day," Armstrong said, prior to boarding a flight to Grenoble.

His team director, Johan Bruyneel, sounded relieved further mishaps were avoided. *AP*

Bowie snares maiden title

BOWIE

SYLVANIA, Ohio—American Heather Bowie survived some tense moments Sunday to capture the first LPGA title of her career with a playoff victory over South Korean Gloria Park.

Bowie walked away with the $1.2 million Jamie Farr Owens Corning Classic after Park collapsed on the third playoff hole.

The 30-year-old, who is in her sixth year on the US women's tour, managed to hang on through some scintillating shots from Park.

"I think the first one has to be the hardest," said Bowie, who was making her 138th career start.

On the first playoff hole—the par-five 18th—Bowie sank a par putt, only to see Park respond with one of her own from about 25 feet.

At the par-five 17th, Bowie again looked like she could end things when she landed her third shot within about a foot of the cup, while Park left her third shot nearly 40 feet from the hole.

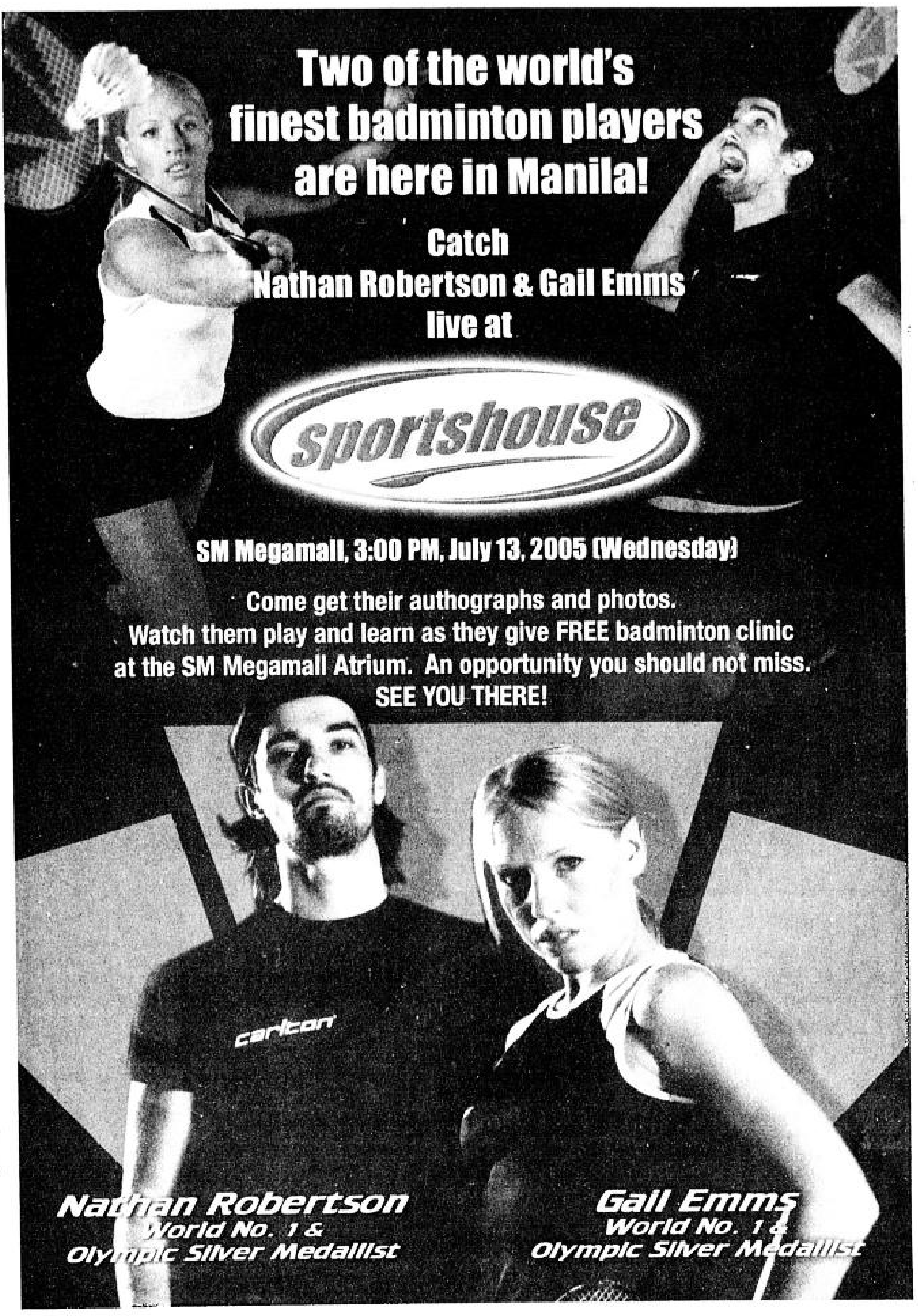
But Park came through with her birdie attempt, putting the pressure on Bowie, who easily tapped in to send the playoff back to 18.

There, Park pulled her tee shot, then hit her second shot into the water. Following a drop, things got worse as she sent her next shot into the grandstand.

Park wound up with a triple-bogey, making things easy for Bowie, who parred the hole and became the season's sixth first-time winner. *AFP*

Montoya tops Grand Prix

SILVERSTONE, England—Juan Pablo Montoya won the British Grand Prix on Sunday after forcing Renault's Formula One championship leader Fernando Alonso to back off. The Colombian celebrated his first victory of the season, and first with the Mercedes-powered McLaren team after winning last year's Brazilian season-ender. *Reuters*


Two of the world's finest badminton players are here in Manila!
Catch Nathan Robertson & Gail Emms live at
sportshouse
SM Megamall, 3:00 PM, July 13, 2005 (Wednesday)
Come get their autographs and photos.
Watch them play and learn as they give FREE badminton clinic at the SM Megamall Atrium. An opportunity you should not miss.
SEE YOU THERE!
carlton
Nathan Robertson
World No. 1 &
Olympic Silver Medallist
Gail Emms
World No. 1 &
Olympic Silver Medallist

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER TV GUIDE

Tuesday, July 12, 2005

HOLLYWOOD DREAM
Hosted by Eric Quizon

THE DREAM BEGINS JULY 17! The much-talked - about reality show "Hollywood Dream" will finally begin! Find out who will get a chance to fly to New York and Los Angeles, meet Hollywood producers and casting directors, get a Screen Actors Guild card, appear on "As the World Turns" and land a role in 2 movies being produced in Hollywood!

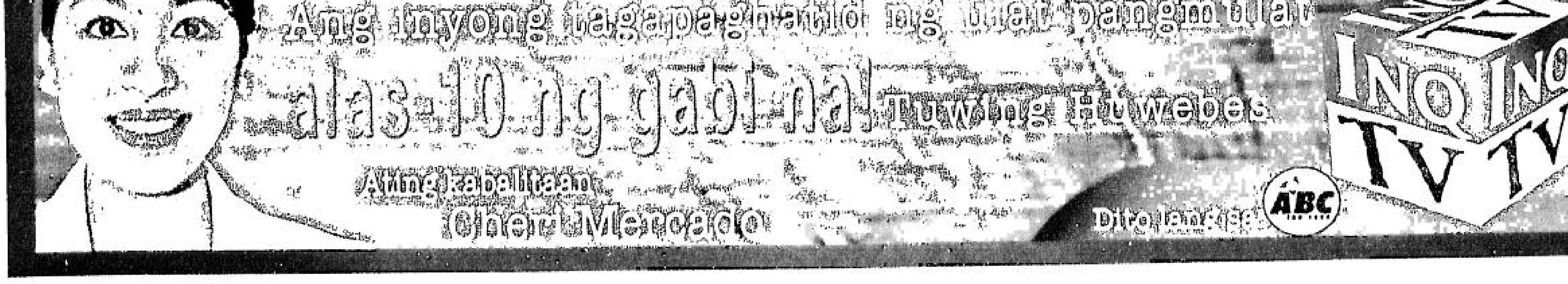
SUNDAY 9:00 PM

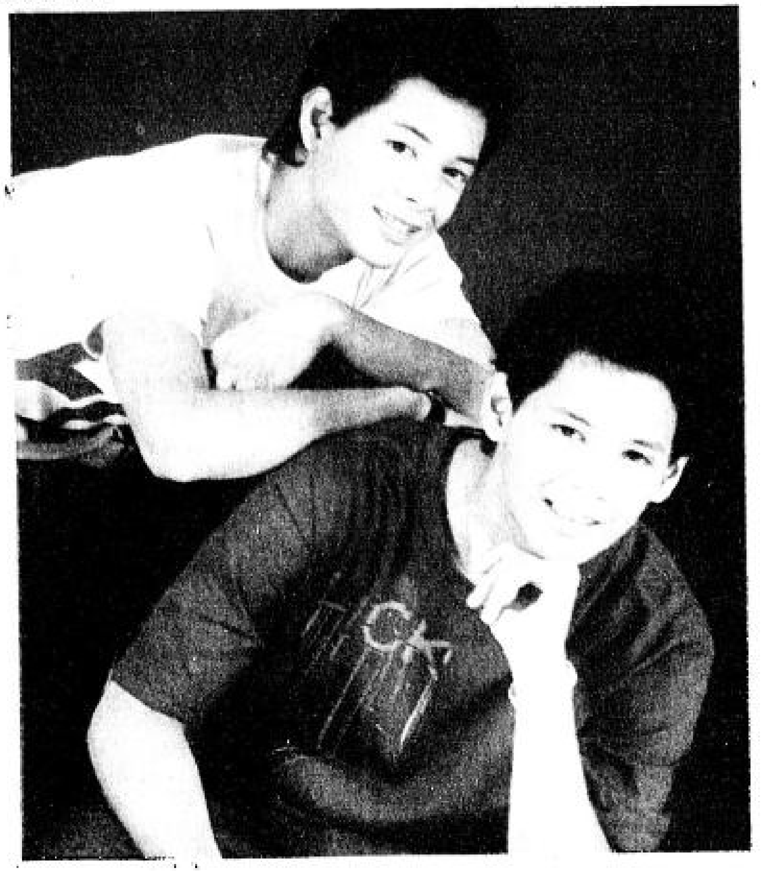
ABC

ClickTheCity.com

Channel	2:30PM	3:00PM	3:30PM	4:00PM	4:30PM	5:00PM	5:30PM	6:00PM	6:30PM	7:00PM	7:30PM	8:00PM	8:30PM	9:00PM	9:30PM	10:00PM	10:30PM	11:00PM	11:30PM
NBN	Environmental Documentary	Value Vision			Teledyaryo	Value Vision		Concert at the Park		The Working President	Family Rosary Crusade	Teledyaryo		Network Forum		Auto Focus			
ABS-CBN 2	Kapamilya Cinema				Pasion de Amor	Mr. Bean	Naruto	Qpids	Meteor Garden Season 2	TV Patrol World	Mga Anghel Na Walang Langit	Ikaw Ang Lahat Sa Akin	Kampanerang Kuba	Green Rose	Oh! Feel Young	Bora			Insider
ABC 5			EZ Shop		PBA (Reruns)				Sentro	Lizzie Mcguire	ABC Action Movies				Big News	The Probe Team Documentaries		ESPN Golf	
GMA 7	Saang Sulok Ng Langit	Now and Forever	Glass Shoes	Tenjho Tenge	Shaman King	Flame Of Recca	Full House	24 Oras		Darna	Encantadia	Sugo		Attic Cat	Extra Challenge	Bahay Mo Ba 'To?			Saksi
RPN 9		Metro TV Shopping	Defenders Of The Earth	Hey Arnold!	As Told By Ginger	Wild Thornberrys	Sponge Bob	The Insider	Tough Enough	7 Days		Medium		Cold Case		Newswatch Now	Emancipation Of Mariah Carey		
IBC 13		EZ Shop		EZ Shop		Home Shopping Network	IBC Express Balita	Pangarap Kong Jackpot		Shakey's V-League				Japan 9-Ball			IBC News Tonite	Up Close And Personal	
SBN 21		Morph TV		Oras Ng Himala		SBN Sing Along		Powerline	Gospel Of The Kingdom			Give Us This Day		Behold		The Kingdom Of Jesus Christ		Evening Devotions	
Studio 23								Get Backers	Beyblade	Wazzup Wazzup	The Rebel Billionaire	Angel		Smallville		News Central	Oprah		The Men's Room
MTV Philippines			Hangin Out at MTV		MTV Get Spotted		TRL		Ask Mayonnaise	MTV Divas		Carmen & Dave	Room Raiders	High School Stories	I Want A Famous Face	On Board at MTV	Whatever Things	VH1 Video Collection	
MYX	Star MYX	Urban MYX	Rock MYX	OPM MYX	My MYX	Take 5	MYX Backtrax	MYX Firsts	Mellow MYX	Pop MYX	Urban MYX	MYX Daily Top Ten		Top Of The Pops	Mobile MYX Top Picks	My MYX	OPM MYX	MYX Backtrax	Mellow MYX
CNN		Business International		Larry King Live		World News	World Sport	Business International		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		World News	World Sport	World News Asia		Your World Today	
ESPN					X-Games Files	2005 WPBA West Coast Classic		LPGA Golf				Sportscenter Asia	2005 WPBA West Coast Classic		2004 Century 21 Home Run Derby				Sportscenter Asia
Solar Sports		TV Shopping		2005 Fivb World Grand Prix				Las Vegas Summer League				2005 MVP Cup Asia vs. Europe							
Cinemax			How To Save A Marriage And Ruin Your Life				Clockstoppers			Greedy (7:10 PM)				No Way Up			Unforgiven		
Hallmark Channel	Who's The Boss	Regenesis		HCA: The Fairytaler	Sesame Street		Mad About You	Who's The Boss	The Nanny	Sue Thomas F.B.Eye		Regenesis					Missing (10:35PM)		Sue Thomas: F.B.Eye
Disney Channel	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	Totally Spies	Art Attack/Un-talkative Bunny	So Little Time	Buzz Lightyear Of Star Command	Martin Mystery	Totally Spies	Kim Possible	Mr. Bean: The Animated Series	House Of Mouse	Land Before Time IV: Journey Through The Mists			So Little Time	Sabrina, The Animated Series	Mickey Mouse and Friends	Chip N Dale's Rescue Rangers	Dinosaur Island	
Discovery Channel		Rameses: Wrath Of God Or Man?				Polar Bear Battlefields		Wild Weather		Rides		Human Discovery		Wild Discovery		The Dangerman Adventures w/ Geoff Mackley		Science Mysteries	
National Geographic		Air Crash Investigation		Seconds From Disaster		Interpol Investigates		Wildlife Detectives	Insects From Hell	Wow		About Asia		Nat'l Geographic Specials		Air Crash Investigation		Seconds From Disaster	
Cartoon Network	Scooby-Doo Show	The All New Popeye Show		Tom & Jerry Show	The Woody Woodpecker Show	X-Men Evolution	Static Shock	Codename: Kids Next Door	Duck Dodgers	Zoids Fusers	Medabots	The Looney Tunes Show		The Powerpuff Girls	Dexter's Laboratory	Time Squad	Thundercats	Codename Kids Next Door	Duck Dodgers
Nickelodeon	Blues Clues	Rugrats	The Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	All That	Are You Afraid of the Dark?	100 Deeds of Eddie McDowd	The Amanda Show	The Adventures Jimmy Neutron	Fairly Odd Parents	SpongeBob SquarePants	As Told By Ginger	Yakkity Yak	Chalkzone	Rocket Power	Hey Arnold!	The Wild Thornberrys	The Angry Beavers	Rugrats
Lifestyle Network	Secret Gardens	The Fix!	Mission Organization	Carol Duvall	Molto Mario	Hot Off The Grill	Good Eats	Extreme Cuisine	Unwrapped	Passion For Dessert	Second Look		Look For Less	Life & Style		E! True Hollywood Story		Road & Track	Back To Basics
Star World	Frasier	The Bold & The Beautiful		Hollywood Squares	Home Improvement	Buffy The Vampire Slayer		The Simpsons	The Drew Carey Show	Star News Asia	Friends	Ed		Desperate Housewives	Oprah Winfrey Show	Miss Match		Friends	Ed
AXN		CSI: Miami		CSI: Miami		Record Setters		The Associates (Season II)		Alias (Season III)		Ripley's Believe It or Not		CSI: NY (Season I)		The Amazing Race 6		WRC 2005 Mid Season Review	
JackTV	Just For Laughs	Just For Laughs	Hip Hop Nation	WWE Bottomline		WWE Afterburn		X-Play	Banzai	Mad TV		Trigger Happy TV	Primetime Glick	South Park	The Daily Show With Jon Stewart	Stripperella	Family Guy	Wwe Heat	
ETC		Good Morning Miami	Knock First	Blind Date	Fifth Wheel	Elimidate	Change of Heart	Seinfeld	Ambush Makeover	JKX	Simple Life	One Tree Hill		Who Wants To Marry My Dad		Entertainment Tonight	The Insider	The Tonight Show With Jay Leno	
HBO		Real Life (3:15 PM)				The Charlie's Angels Story		Charlotte Gray (6:15 PM)					The Truth About Charlie			My House In Umbria			Only You (11:40PM)
Star Movies				Shadow Of Fear			Mixed Nuts			Sister Act 2 (7:10 PM)				Stuart Little			Madonna: Truth Or Dare		
Cinema One		Dalagang Ilokana				Paano Kung Wala Ka Na				Espadang Patpat				Home Along Da Riles 2				Pangako Ikaw Lang	
EWTN	Pope John Paul's Legacy To The Family	Angelus (3:15 PM)	Mysteries Of The Rosary	My Little Angels	Angel Force	The Holy Rosary With Mother Angelica and the Nuns Of Our Lady Of Angels Monastery	Fr. Groeschel	Catholic Morality & The Catechism	EWTN Gallery	The Journey Home		Does The Church Still Teach That	Lord, Have Mercy	Daily Mass		Angelus (10:15PM)	We Are One Body	Web Of Faith	

TV SCHEDULES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE.


Ang inyong tagapaghatid ng ulat pangmulat
alas-10 ng gabi na! Tuwing Huwebes
Ating kabalitaan Cheri Mercado
Dito lang sa ABC
INQ TV



Roco twins a match made for show biz

Text, styling and direction by Larry Leviste
Photos by Romy Homillada
MENSWEAR BY BLUE SODA
GROOMING BY DIERIE ORTIZ

DOMINIC and Felix Roco are the youngest twin sons of acting great Bembol Roco and former modeling great Coco Artadi. Although born identical, the 16-year-olds have very different personalities, evident in their answers to our questions.

Both were launched by ABS-CBN on "Qpids," a reality love connection show where viewers get to text their votes, at P50 per SMS, to decide who among the young couples should end up together. A TV insider says text-drawing shows such as this one generate more revenue from participating viewers than from ad placements. There's a reality check.

First kiss?

Felix (hair gelled up): I'm a virgin.

Dominic (hair waxed down): With my first girlfriend last Christmas.

You would never wear...

Felix: Speedos.

Dominic: A dress.

Do you have a phobia?

Felix: Claustrophobia.

Dominic: Heights.

Favorite horror movie?

Felix: "The Exorcist."

Dominic: "The Texas Chain Saw Massacre."

Favorite day of the week?

Felix: Saturday, break from school.

Dominic: Sunday, lunch with the family.

Most annoying thing people ask?

Felix: When is your brother's birthday?

Dominic: Are you guys twins?

What do you do when you're nervous?

Felix: I pace. I rub my hands.

Dominic: I sit still. I pray.

Favorite expression?

Felix: Wow!

Dominic: What?

Parents' best advice?

Felix: Always be on time. Love your work.

Dominic: Remember to have fun also.

Get-in-the mood music?

Felix: Alternative, as in Incubus.

Dominic: Hip-hop, as in DMX.

If you could reprise one of your dad's movie roles...?

Felix: Of course, "Maynila sa Kuko ng Liwanag."

Dominic: "Tatlong Taong Walang Diyos."

MMTA
METRO MANILA THEATERS ASSOCIATION
MOVIE GUIDE
NOW SHOWING

SHANG CINEPLEX
6th floor Shangrila Plaza EDSA corner Shaw Boulevard, Mandaluyong City
Telephone: 633.2227 / 6337851 loc. 171
1 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR GP
2 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR GP
3 (DOLBY) MONSTER IN LAW PG13
4 (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS PG13
PREMIERE
(DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR GP

Filinvest FESTIVAL CINEMA
(Muntinlupa) tel 850.3571 or 72
1 (DDS) FANTASTIC FOUR
2 (SDDS) FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DTS) WAR OF THE WORLDS
4 (GOLD DTS) BATMAN BEGINS
5 GOLD (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
6 (GOLD SDDS) WAR OF THE WORLDS
7 (GOLD DOLBY) HOTEL RWANDA
8 [illegible] MR AND & MRS SMITH
9 [illegible] CREEP
10 [illegible] MONSTER IN LAW

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
(Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave (C-5) Quezon City) tel 687.6963 or 72
1 (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
4 (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS

CINEMA 2000
Movie Theatres of the New Millenium

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7383
1 AMITYVILL HORROR
2 (DTS) FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
4 WAR OF THE WORLDS

Cinema 2000 Pavilion Mall
(Biñan) tel (049) 411.1146
1 WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DTS) FANTASTIC FOUR
4 SIX

Cinema 2000 Cinemagix
(Urdaneta) tel(075) 568.6771
1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 SHUTTER
3 (DOLBY) MR. & MRS. SMITH

Cinema 2000 Metrotown
(Tarlac) tel (045) 982.1729
1 COACH CARTER
2 RING OF NIBELUNGS
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
4 (DTS) MR & MRS SMITH

Cinema 2000 Waltermart
(Plaridel) tel (044) 795.3320
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS

Lianas Cinema
(Alabang) tel 850.1276
1 (SDDS) BATMAN BEGINS
2 KALAPATI SA GABI
3 TWO TIMER
4 (DTS) CREEP

Lianas MovieCity
(Calamba) tel (049) 545.7202
1 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
2 SIX
3 (DTS) AMITYVILL HORROR
4 TWO TIMER
5 WAR OF THE WORLDS

Fiesta World Mall
(Lipa) tel (043) 981.0790
1 SHAOLIN'S EVIL DEAD
2 SHUTTER
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 WAR OF THE WORLDS

Berma Cinema
(Baclaran) tel 879.2030 / 879.2029
1 KALAPATI SA GABI
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS

CINEMA 2000
Cinema 2000 Waltermart Makati
Waltermart Center, Chino Roces Ave. cor. Antonio Arnaiz Pio del Pilar, Makati City
Tel 816.4214 / 816.4216
1 WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 MONSTER IN LAW
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

Universal
(Manila) tel: 7334043 or 2470
1 FANTASTIC FOUR

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Mandaluyong) tel. 7266150
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 KALAPATI SA GABI
4 (DOLBY DIGITAL EX) FANTASTIC FOUR
5 WAR OF THE WORLDS

METROPOLIS star
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(ALABANG) tel. 8504285, 5433994
1 KALAPATI SA GABI
2 CREEP
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED
5 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
6 WAR OF THE WORLDS

starmall Movies
www.clickthecity.com.ph
(Las Pinas) tel (047) 237.7007
1 (DOLBY) BATMAN BEGINS
2 RESERVED

Blue Wave MARQUINTON
Sumulong Highway cor. Mayor Gil Fernando Street, Sto. Niño, Marikina City tel. 9341927
1 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
2 (DOLBY) WAR OF THE WORLDS
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
4 (DOLBY) MR. & MRS. SMITH

SUPER CINERAMA
Isetann Cinerama Complex Recto
tel 733.4238
1 (DOLBY) SOON TO OPEN
2 SOON TO OPEN
3 SOON TO OPEN
4 SOON TO OPEN
5 SOON TO OPEN

MARKETPLACE
Mandaluyong tel 533.3851 / 533.3856
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS
3 TAGOS SA LAMAN
4 RESERVED

Masagana CINEMA
(Pasay) tel 833.3290, 833.3274
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS
3 KALAPATI SA GABI

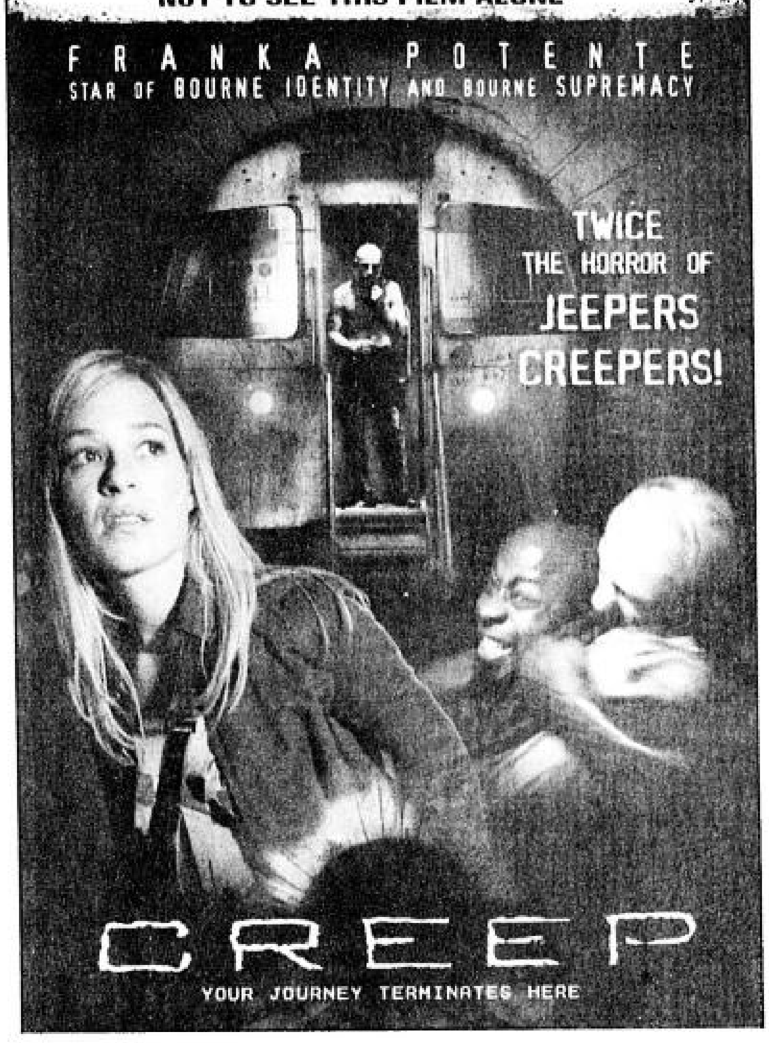
Jade Cinema
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.5001 to 03
1 (DOLBY EX) FANTASTIC FOUR
2 SHUTTER
3 (DTS EX) FANTASTIC FOUR
4 WAR OF THE WORLDS

Cine Nepo
(Angeles City) tel (045) 887.0121
1 WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 SHUTTER
3 (DOLBY) FANTASTIC FOUR
4 (DTS) FANTASTIC FOUR

Cine Nepo
(Dagupan City) tel (075) 515.8489
1 SHUTTER
2 HITCH HIKER'S GUIDE
3 (DOLBY) BATMAN BEGINS
4 (DTS) MR. & MRS. SMITH

Centre Plaza Cinema
(Balanga, Bataan) tel (047) 237.7007
1 BATMAN BEGINS
2 HAPPILY EVER AFTER

MOVIES / SCHEDULES / PRICES SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE



MTRCB RATING ▶ R-13 STRICTLY FOR 13 YEARS OF AGE AND ABOVE
NOW SHOWING!
PERSONS WITH WEAK HEARTS ARE ADVISED NOT TO SEE THIS FILM ALONE
FRANKA POTENTE
STAR OF BOURNE IDENTITY AND BOURNE SUPREMACY
TWICE THE HORROR OF JEEPERS CREEPERS!
CREEP
YOUR JOURNEY TERMINATES HERE

Araneta Center Leisure Guide

FH folded&hung
sale Up to 70% off
ongoing until August 15
Level 2, Gateway Mall

CINEMA SCHEDULES
Gateway Cineplex 10
LEVEL 4, GATEWAY MALL
ONLY P99 ADMISSION
P120 RESERVED SEATS
P140 WAR OF THE WORLDS
BATMAN BEGINS & FANTASTIC 4
DOLBY DIGITAL-EX
FOR INQUIRIES, PLEASE CALL TICKETNET AT 911-5555

MR & MRS SMITH
1:30 / 4:00 / 6:30 / 9:00
WAR OF THE WORLDS
1:20 / 2:10 / 4:10 / 5:00 / 7:00 / 7:50 / 9:50
MONSTER IN LAW
2:45 / 5:15 / 7:45 / 10:00
FANTASTIC FOUR
12:10 / 12:50 / 1:30 / 3:00
3:40 / 4:20 / 5:50 / 6:30
7:10 / 8:40 / 9:20 / 10:00
BATMAN BEGINS
1:00 / 3:50 / 6:40 / 9:30
CREEP
12:35 / 2:45 / 4:55 / 7:05 / 9:15

GLOBE PLATINUM CINEMA
ADMISSION : P 299 / Globe Platinum Subscribers P249
FANTASTIC FOUR
1:30 / 4:20 / 7:10 / 10:00

ALI MALL CINEMAS
❶ FANTASTIC FOUR 12.30 / 3:20 / 6:10 / 9:00
❷ WAR OF THE WORLDS 11:30 / 1:50 / 4:10 / 6:30 / 8:50
❸ BATMAN BEGINS 12:20 / 3:00 / 5:40 / 8:20
❹ KALAPATI SA GABI 12.00 / 2:05 / 4:10 / 6:15 / 8:20
❺ CREEP 11:30 / 1:40 / 3:50 / 6:00 / 8:10
DOLBY DIGITAL dts SDDS

ARANETA COLISEUM EVENTS
July 13, Wednesday PBA FINALS - GAME 6 (if nec.) 7:30 pm San Miguel vs Talk n Text
July 16 UAAP GAMES Adu vs FEU 10am Jrs / 2pm Srs ADMU vs UST 12nn Jrs / 4pm Srs
July 21 UAAP GAMES ADMU vs FEU 10am Jrs / 4pm Srs UST vs Adu 12nn Jrs / 2pm Srs
JOHN MAXWELL ASIAN TOUR 2005 July 22, Friday 6:00 pm

CENTER EVENTS
NEW STORES: Coffee Bean & Tea Leaf at the Cineplex 10 Lobby, Pizza Hut at Level 3, Menage Salon at Level 2, Teriyaki Boy at Level 3, all at Gateway Mall
PERFORMANCES: Guarana on July 15, Acoustic Jive on July 16 & Mon David on July 17 at the Gateway Roxas Tunnel
EXHIBITS: Herbie: Fully Loaded life-size replica on display ongoing until July 13 at the Gateway Cineplex 10 Lobby
Mega Magazine's 10 Most Beautiful Women Exhibit ongoing until July 15 at the Upper Ground Floor of Gateway Mall
LOG ON TO www.aranetacenter.net FOR MORE DETAILS OR TO SUBSCRIBE TO OUR WEEKLY E-MAIL ENTERTAINMENT UPDATES

Movies to the max

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

THIS month, the Cinemax film channel fields these creditable viewing treats that should be worth your while even the second time around:

"The Bourne Identity" stars **Matt Damon** as a man with a dark past that he can't remember. After being in grave physical danger, he wakes up with amnesia and bullet wounds on his back. He tries to search for his past, but as it begins to rear its ugly head, so do the killers who want to take him out. With **Chris Cooper** and **Franka Potente.**

In "The Butcher's Wife," love, like clairvoyance, requires a leap of faith, as a clairvoyant (**Demi Moore**) has an uncanny influence on everyone in her neighborhood. But the person for whom her ability causes the most pandemonium is herself!

"The Firm," based on **John Grisham**'s best-selling novel, is a tale of youthful ambition caught in a maze of intrigue. A topnotch Harvard law graduate (**Tom Cruise**) and his wife (**Jeanne Tripplehorn**) are seduced by the promise of big money as they're taken under the wing of the firm's most powerful partner (**Gene Hackman**). But it doesn't take them long to realize that the good life is not what it appears to be.

"The Hunt for Red October" has a Russian captain trying to defect in style—on board a nuclear submarine. As the sub with its lethal nuclear content heads for the United States, the two nations are at the brink of war.

"Unforgiven" won four Academy Awards in 1993, including one for actor-director **Clint Eastwood**, who transformed the western genre with this unsparing portrait of the American West. He plays a former gunfighter and thief struggling to overcome his evil past. Desperate for money to support his children, he accepts one final job: to kill a couple of sinister cowboys and collect the bounty.

Riding into town with his old partner (**Morgan Freeman**), he soon comes up against the local sheriff (Gene Hackman). The sheriff is a hard-nosed lawkeeper who intends to chase suspicious characters out of town the second they ride in.

Before the old gunfighter and the sheriff are through with each other, there will be blood spilled and casualties lined up against the fence. Hackman won a Best Supporting Actor for his performance in this movie, and the film itself received a Best Picture nod.

"Waterland" is a captivating film adaptation of **Graham Swift**'s contemporary novel. **Jeremy Irons** plays a high school history teacher in 1974 Pittsburgh who is faced with apathetic students, and a barren wife with psychological problems (**Sinead Cusack**).

Her growing conviction that God will send her a baby through a "miracle," coupled with a students' declaration that history serves no worthwhile purpose, triggers the teacher to share his personal history with his students.

In remarkable sequences where the past and the present intersect, the teacher takes his students on a journey that spans two generations of his family's life in England's marshlands.

Finally, "Will Penny" is a memorable 1968 western that has been described by the New York Post as "a western to place among the classics of the genre." For his part, critic Leonard **Matlin** has cited the production as "one of the best films on the cowboy-loner ever to come out of Hollywood."

In the film, aging cowpoke Will Penny (**Charlton Heston**) finds love a little too late in the person of a feisty frontierwoman and mother (**Joan Hackett**). Stark atmosphere, gritty detail and stunning photography create a remarkably true picture of life in the Old West.

> Worth every viewer's while even the second time around

'Tableaux/Photos'

IVI Avellana-Cosio's new exhibit, "Tableaux/Photos," will have its opening reception at 5 p.m. today at Le Soufflé Rockwell, Amorsolo Square. Exhibit will be on view during dining hours (11 a.m. to 11 p.m.) until Aug. 9. Call 8906543.

'ICU Bed #7'

"ICU Bed # 7," a quiet but searing family drama about an ailing father and his two daughters' difficult decision whether or not to prolong his life, is one of the nine entries in the first Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival.

Directed by **Rica Arevalo** based on her Palanca Award-Winning screenplay, "ICU Bed #7" stars **Eddie Garcia** as Lolo Joseph, the ornery patriarch who unknowingly changes the lives of his loved ones when he has a brush with death. Playing his daughters are **Irma Adlawan** and **Angel Aquino.**

Arevalo's film will be screened at the CCP at 7 p.m. tomorrow; 9:30 p.m. on July 15; 9:30 p.m. on July 16 and 1 p.m. on July 17. Call 0919-6189048.

Short cuts

From page A26

own film ever since graduating from college. But I knew I had to study more and save up. The long wait was worth it."

Fajardo was just as ecstatic. "I felt fulfilled, like a big thorn was pulled out of my chest. Part of me misses shooting in Bacolod!"

For Tolentino, the end was just the beginning . . . of more work.

"I was tired, very tired," he sighs. "After the shoot, I had to do the editing, the score, transferring it to the mini-DVs and DVDs . . ."

Talk about multitasking. He also designed his own poster!

"I hardly slept, but I was very, very happy," he says.

Ruiz was only too eager to catch a few Zs right after the last take. "I slept for two days straight."

(Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival runs from July 12 to 17 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines. The six short films will be screened at 7 tonight. Visit www.culturalcenter.gov.ph for the complete schedule.)

Not so deep . . .

From page A25

it hooks the viewer into wondering what will happen next. The fact that nothing much does happen shows the weakness of the writing, not the director.

According to its press releases, "Masahista" has been entered in the digital film competition of this year's 58th Locarno International Film Festival in Switzerland. I hope it creates enough of a buzz to get picked up for distribution.

SHANG CINEPLEX
1 FANTASTIC FOUR MTRCB GP 12 10, 2 40, 5.10, 7:40, 10.10 LMF
2 FANTASTIC FOUR MTRCB GP 1.40, 4 10, 6 40, 9.10 LMF
3 MONSTER IN LAW MTRCB PG-13 11 35, 2 00, 4 25, 6 50, 9:15
4 WAR OF THE WORLDS MTRCB PG 13 12 00, 2 30, 5 00, 7 30, 10 00
PREMIERE THEATRE FANTASTIC FOUR MTRCB GP 11 40 2 10 4 40 7 10 9 40 LMF
Movies and schedules are subject to change without prior notice
Catch the Cineplex Special
Get your tickets to
FANTASTIC FOUR
in advance starting July 1, 2005
No extra service fee
Regular screening begins July 6. 2005
Regular Ticket Price
Cinemas 1 to 4 - P180
Premiere Theatre - P295 (includes unlimited popcorn and beverage)
Call 633-7851, loc. 171 or 633-2227 / 633-4735 for more details.
Shangri-La Plaza

EASTWOOD CINEMAS
Eastwood City Walk 2, Eastwood City
E. Rodriguez Jr. Ave. (C-5) Quezon City
ADVANCE TICKETS AVAILABLE FOR FANTASTIC FOUR
For inquiries, call:
687-6963
GUARANTEED SEATS
MOVIES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE
1 WAR OF THE WORLDS 11:40, 2:20, 5:00 7:40, 10:20 PG-13
2 FANTASTIC FOUR 11:40, 2:20, 5:00 7:40, 10:20 GP
3 FANTASTIC FOUR 12:20, 3:00, 5:40 8:20, 11:00 GP
4 FANTASTIC FOUR 11:00, 1:40, 4:20, 7:00, 9:30 GP

POWER PLANT CINEMA
Rockwell Center, Makati City ☎ Tel. No: 8981440-41
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND-EX

FANTASTIC FOUR GP 1:05,3:35,6:05,8:35	FANTASTIC FOUR GP 11:55,2:25,4:55, 7:25,9:55	FANTASTIC 4 GP 1:50,4:20,6:50,9:20
WAR OF THE WORLDS PG13 12:00,2:30,5.00,7:30,10:00	MONSTER IN LAW PG13 1:10,3:30,5:50,8;10,10:20	FANTASTIC 4 GP 12:30,3.00,5:30, 8:00,10:30

GREENHILLS CINEMAS
GREENHILLS SHOPPING CENTER, ORTIGAS AVENUE, GREENHILLS, SAN JUAN, METRO MANILA
THEATRE MALL GREENHILLS
a landmark reinvented!
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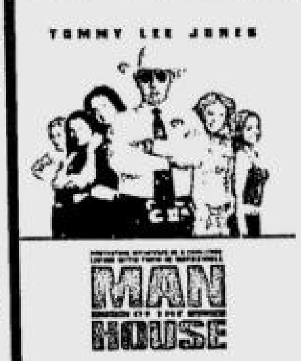
CINEMA 1 WAR OF THE WORLDS PG13 11:10, 1:40, 4:10, 6:40, 9:10
CINEMA 2 FANTASTIC 4 GP 11:15, 1:45, 4:15, 6:45, 9:20
DOLBY DIGITAL SURROUND•EX
PROMENADE GREENHILLS
...a dinetertainment for all!
NOW SHOWING
CINEMA 3 WAR OF THE WORLDS PG13 12:10, 2:40, 5:10, 7:40, 10:10
CINEMA 4 FANTASTIC 4 GP 12:00, 2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00
CINEMA 5 FANTASTIC 4 GP 10:30, 1:00, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 11:00
TICKET PRICES & SCREENING TIME SUBJECT TO CHANGE WITHOUT PRIOR NOTICE. FOR CINEMA INQUIRIES, PLEASE CALL: 722 4496.
MUSIC MUSEUM
JULY 29 & 30 SOULSISTERS (Jessa, Marissa & Ara) 8PM
FOR INQUIRIES & RESERVATION, PLS. CALL : 721-6726 OR 721-0635



Experience SM CINEMA movietime
movie schedules events promos
Here are the results for the last week's poll!
"What movies are you into?"
TOP FIVE MOVIES
• Monster-in-law ★★★★★
• War of the worlds ★★★★
• Herbie Fully Loaded ★★★★
• Fantastic Four ★★★
• Happily Ever After ★★★
TOMMY LEE JONES
MAN OF THE HOUSE
Witness this hilarious comedy about a Texan ranger teamed up with cheerleaders!
Watch it EXCLUSIVELY at SM North Edsa today!
WAVE 89.1
FOR GUARANTEED SEATS
the podium 633-8976
1 FANTASTIC FOUR 11:50FS/12:30MF/02:40/05:00/07:20 09:05LFS/09:40LMF/11:25END
2 FANTASTIC FOUR 01:00FS/01:30MF/03:45/06:00/08:15 10:00LFS/10:30LMF/12:15END
megamall 633-1901
WAR OF THE WORLDS 12:50FS/01:30MF/04:00/06:30 08:30LFS/09:00LMF/11:00END
cebu (032) 231-3876
1 FANTASTIC FOUR 12:10FS/12:30MF/02:40/04:50/07:00 08:55LFS/09:10LFS/11:05END
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS 11:40FS/11:50MF/02:15/04:40/07:05 09:05LFS/09:30LMF/11:30END
3 FANTASTIC FOUR 10:40FS/10:50MF/01:00/03:10/05:20/07:30 09:25LFS/09:45LMF/11:35END

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A Special Back-to-School Presentation
An Inspiring story about following your own dreams
Ice Princess
Big things happen to those who dream big.
Watch it EXCLUSIVELY at SM Fairview today!
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SM MEGAMALL
WAR OF THE WORLDS
FANTASTIC FOUR
MONSTER-IN-LAW
MR. & MRS. SMITH
CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
BATMAN
8 FANTASTIC FOUR
9 HAPPILY EVER AFTER
NASAAN KA MAN
WAR OF THE WORLDS
CREEP

SM CITY FAIRVIEW
1 HOTEL RWANDA
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
3 SHUTTER
4 WAR OF THE WORLDS
5 NASAAN KA MAN
6 MR. & MRS. SMITH
7 FANTASTIC FOUR
8 BATMAN BEGINS
9 MONSTER-IN-LAW
10 HAPPILY EVER AFTER
11 WAR OF THE WORLDS
12 CREEP

SM NORTH EDSA
FANTASTIC FOUR
WAR OF THE WORLDS
MONSTER-IN-LAW
4 BATMAN BEGINS
WAR OF THE WORLDS
FANTASTIC FOUR
CLOSED FOR RENOVATION
8 CLOSED FOR RENOVATION

SM CITY STA MESA
WAR OF THE WORLDS
BATMAN BEGINS
FANTASTIC FOUR
4 CREEP
FANTASTIC FOUR
6 PREMONITION
7 NASAAN KA MAN
HOTEL RWANDA
MONSTER-IN-LAW
10 MR. & MRS. SMITH

SM CITY SOUTHMALL
FANTASTIC FOUR
2 MONSTER-IN-LAW
WAR OF THE WORLDS
4 FANTASTIC FOUR
NASAAN KA MAN
MR. & MRS. SMITH
HAPPILY EVER AFTER
8 BATMAN BEGINS
CREEP
10 MAN OF THE HOUSE

SM CITY MANILA
WAR OF THE WORLDS
MR. & MRS. SMITH
ICE PRINCESS
4 FANTASTIC FOUR
5 MONSTER-IN-LAW
6 FANTASTIC FOUR
7 WAR OF THE WORLDS
8 BATMAN BEGINS
9 NASAAN KA MAN
10 CREEP
11 SHUTTER
12 HAPPILY EVER AFTER

SM CINEMA TUTUBAN
1 RESERVED
2 RESERVED
3 RESERVED
4 RESERVED

SM SUPERCENTER SUCAT
CREEP
2 FANTASTIC FOUR
FANTASTIC FOUR
4 WAR OF THE WORLDS

SM CITY BICUTAN
FANTASTIC FOUR
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS
PREMONITION
FANTASTIC FOUR

LUZON

SM CITY PAMPANGA
FANTASTIC FOUR
FANTASTIC FOUR
NASAAN KA MAN
4 HAPPILY EVER AFTER
HOTEL RWANDA
6 WAR OF THE WORLDS

SM CITY BAGUIO
FANTASTIC FOUR
2 IN GOOD COMPANY
WAR OF THE WORLDS
FANTASTIC FOUR

SM CITY BACOOR
1 MONSTER-IN-LAW
2 HAPPILY EVER AFTER
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 BATMAN BEGINS
5 FANTASTIC FOUR
6 WAR OF THE WORLDS
7 NASAAN KA MAN
8 MR. & MRS. SMITH

SM CITY MARILAO
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS
3 PREMONITION
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

SM CITY DASMARINAS
WAR OF THE WORLDS
2 HOTEL RWANDA
MONSTER-IN-LAW
FANTASTIC FOUR

SM CITY LUCENA
FANTASTIC FOUR
2 UNLEASHED
THE AMITYVILLE HORROR
WAR OF THE WORLDS

SM CITY BATANGAS
WAR OF THE WORLDS
SHUTTER
FANTASTIC FOUR
4 SIN CITY

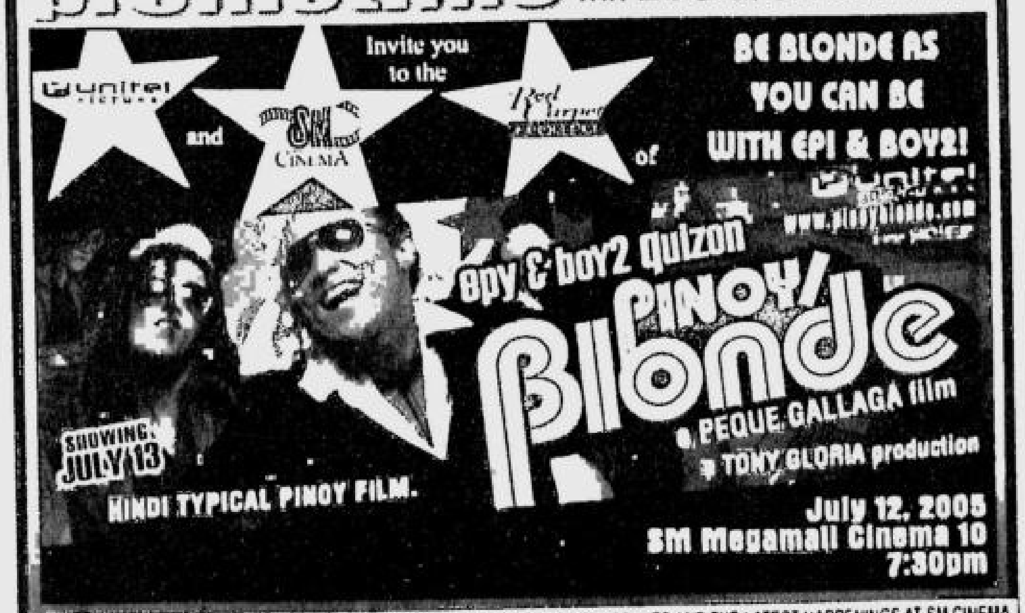
VISAYAS AND MINDANAO

SM CITY CEBU
FANTASTIC FOUR
2 WAR OF THE WORLDS
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 BATMAN BEGINS
5 BIRTH
6 LOVE ME IF YOU DARE
MR. & MRS. SMITH
8 FANTASTIC FOUR

SM CITY ILOILO
FANTASTIC FOUR
RESERVED
3 WAR OF THE WORLDS
4 PREMONITION
A LOT LIKE LOVE
6 FANTASTIC FOUR
RESERVED
8 BATMAN BEGINS

SM CITY DAVAO
1 FANTASTIC FOUR
2 THE JACKET
3 HAPPILY EVER AFTER
4 COACH CARTER
5 WAR OF THE WORLDS
6 FANTASTIC FOUR

SM CITY CAGAYAN DE ORO
FANTASTIC FOUR
2 IN GOOD COMPANY
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 WAR OF THE WORLDS



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Cinema	Schedule
1 FANTASTIC FOUR • THX	1:00 3:15 5:30 7:45 10:00
2 FANTASTIC FOUR	12:00 2:15 4:30 6:45 9:00
3 SHANGHAI LILY	12:00 2:15 4:30 6:45 9:00
4 CREEP	1:05 3:15 5:25 7:35 9:45
5 WAR OF THE WORLDS	12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00
6 FANTASTIC FOUR	12:30 2:45 5:00 7:30 10:00
7 BATMAN BEGINS	1:00 4:00 7:00 10:00
8 MONSTER-IN-LAW	12:45 3:10 5:35 8:00 10:00
9 WAR OF THE WORLDS	2:00 4:30 7:00 9:30
10 MR. AND MRS. SMITH	1:45 4:30 7:15 10:00

ERMITA
536-7809 to 12

Cinema	Schedule
1 FANTASTIC FOUR	12:50 3:10 5:30 7:50 10:00
2 CREEP	12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00
3 MONSTER-IN-LAW	12:00 2:00 4:00 6:00 8:00 10:00
4 FANTASTIC FOUR	12:00 2:20 4:40 7:00 9:20
5 FANTASTIC FOUR	12:00 2:20 4.40 7:00 9:20
6 BATMAN BEGINS	12:00 3:15 6:30 9:45
7 WAR OF THE WORLDS	12:00 2:30 5:00 7:30 10:00

METRO EAST
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Cinema	Schedule
1 MONSTER-IN-LAW	1:30 4:00 6:30 9:00
2 FANTASTIC FOUR	12:15 2:50 5:25 8:00
3 MR. AND MRS. SMITH	1:30 2:15 4:30 6:45 9:00
4 WAR OF THE WORLDS	12:00 2:15 4:30 6:45 9:00
5 BATMAN BEGINS	12:00 3:00 6:00 9:00
6 FANTASTIC FOUR	4:50 7:25
7 FANTASTIC FOUR	2:15 4:50
8 CREEP	2:10 4:30 6:50 9 10

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2 WAR OF THE WORLDS
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4 WAR OF THE WORLDS

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2 MONSTER-IN-LAW
3 FANTASTIC FOUR
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

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3 SHUTTER
4 FANTASTIC FOUR

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3 BATMAN BEGINS
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G1 GLORIETTA 1	1	FANTASTIC 4	
	2	WAR OF THE WORLDS	
	3	MONSTER-IN-LAW	
	4	FANTASTIC 4t	
G4 GLORIETTA 4	1	WAR OF THE WORLDS	
	2	FANTASTIC 4	
	3 THX	FANTASTIC 4	1:00, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS
	4	BATMAN BEGINS	
	5	MONSTER-IN-LAW	
	6	FANTASTIC 4	
	7	FANTASTIC 4	
GB1 GREENBELT 1	1	WAR OF THE WORLDS	11:00, 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00
	2	FANTASTIC 4	11:10, 1:40, 4:10, 6:40, 9:10
GB3 GREENBELT 3	1 THX	FANTASTIC 4	12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30 GUARANTEED SEATS
	2 THX	FANTASTIC 4	2:30, 5:00, 7:30, 10:00 GUARANTEED SEATS
	3	FANTASTIC 4	1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00, 11:30 GUARANTEED SEATS
	4	FANTASTIC 4	1:00, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30, 11:00 GUARANTEED SEATS
	5	WAR OF THE WORLDS	GUARANTEED SEATS
ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	1 THX	FANTASTIC 4	
	2	WAR OF THE WORLDS	
	3	FANTASTIC 4	
	4	FANTASTIC 4	
	5	MONSTER-IN-LAW	
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	2	WAR OF THE WORLDS	
	3	FANTASTIC 4	
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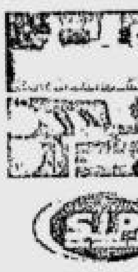

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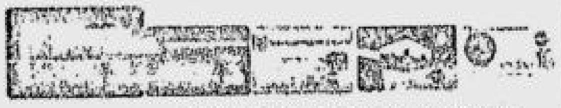

Per DTI-NCR Permit No. A2-354, Series of 2005

Pitch-perfect sendoff

Luther Vandross off to 'Dance with My Father' again

NEW YORK— The funeral service for eight-time Grammy winner Luther Vandross hit just the right notes this weekend—soulful, joyful and powerful, an echo of the late singer's unforgettable voice.

Family, friends and fans filled The Riverside Church for a celebration of Vandross' life, a memorial service that morphed into a revival meeting before ending with an all-star rendition of his hit single "Power of Love/Love Power."

Vandross' wide appeal was evident in the first few rows of mourners. Current hitmakers Usher and Alicia Keys shared space with music legends Stevie Wonder, Aretha Franklin and Patti LaBelle.

"There are no sad faces here today," said longtime friend LaBelle, resplendent in a bright yellow dress. "I'm celebrating because Luther would want us to."

Vandross, 54, died July 1 at a New Jersey hospital, two years after he suffered a debilitating stroke. He sold more than 25 million records in his long career, with hits like "Stop For Love" and "Dance With My Father."

As Vandross' gold coffin sat at the foot of the altar, LaBelle read a poem written by his mother, Mary Ida, who was seated in the front row. Vandross' other family members, nine nieces and their 11 children, filled in the seats around the family matriarch.

The altar bore just a single, simple floral arrangement, with white lilies rising from a collection of white and yellow roses.

Mourners lined up for two city blocks in a driving rain before the church opened. Once inside, they were brought to their feet and moved to cheers repeatedly as Wonder, Franklin and Cissy Houston sang in tribute.

Houston performed the gospel standard "Deep River." Wonder left the crowd breathless with another gospel song, "I Won't Complain."

But it was Franklin, brushing aside a sore throat, who sent choir and clergy dancing on the altar with her version of "Amazing Grace."

Singer Gladys Knight, another Vandross friend and admirer, sent a faxed message that referred to the singer's last hit, "Dance with My Father." Luther Vandross Sr. died when his son was still a child.

"We should be happy for Luther," the message said. "He made a difference in this world, and now he has the extraordinary chance to dance with his father again." *AP*

ALICIA Keys and Patti Labelle AP

ARETHA Franklin

STEVIE Wonder AP

Not so deep . . .

From page A26

that the street-wise prostitute is essentially just a kid.

The film's bleached-out, overexposed look and restless cinematography somehow complement the gritty reality that Mendoza is trying to portray.

A number of brief sexual situations might cater to a voyeuristic clientele but they are uncomfortable to sit through if you're straight.

This is not altogether a bad debut for Mendoza. He's not the first local filmmaker to squeeze poetic tragedy from the lives of male prostitutes. Right away, I can think of "Macho Dancer" which examined the subject more effectively.

Despite its flaws, "Masahista" is not the kind of film people will walk out on because, despite a lack of depth,

NOT SO/ A23

2nd WEEK
MTRCB RATING ▶ PG-13 | Children below 13 yrs. old will only be allowed if accompanied by a parent or adult
Find out why this film has become the Talk-of-the-Town
Jane Fonda
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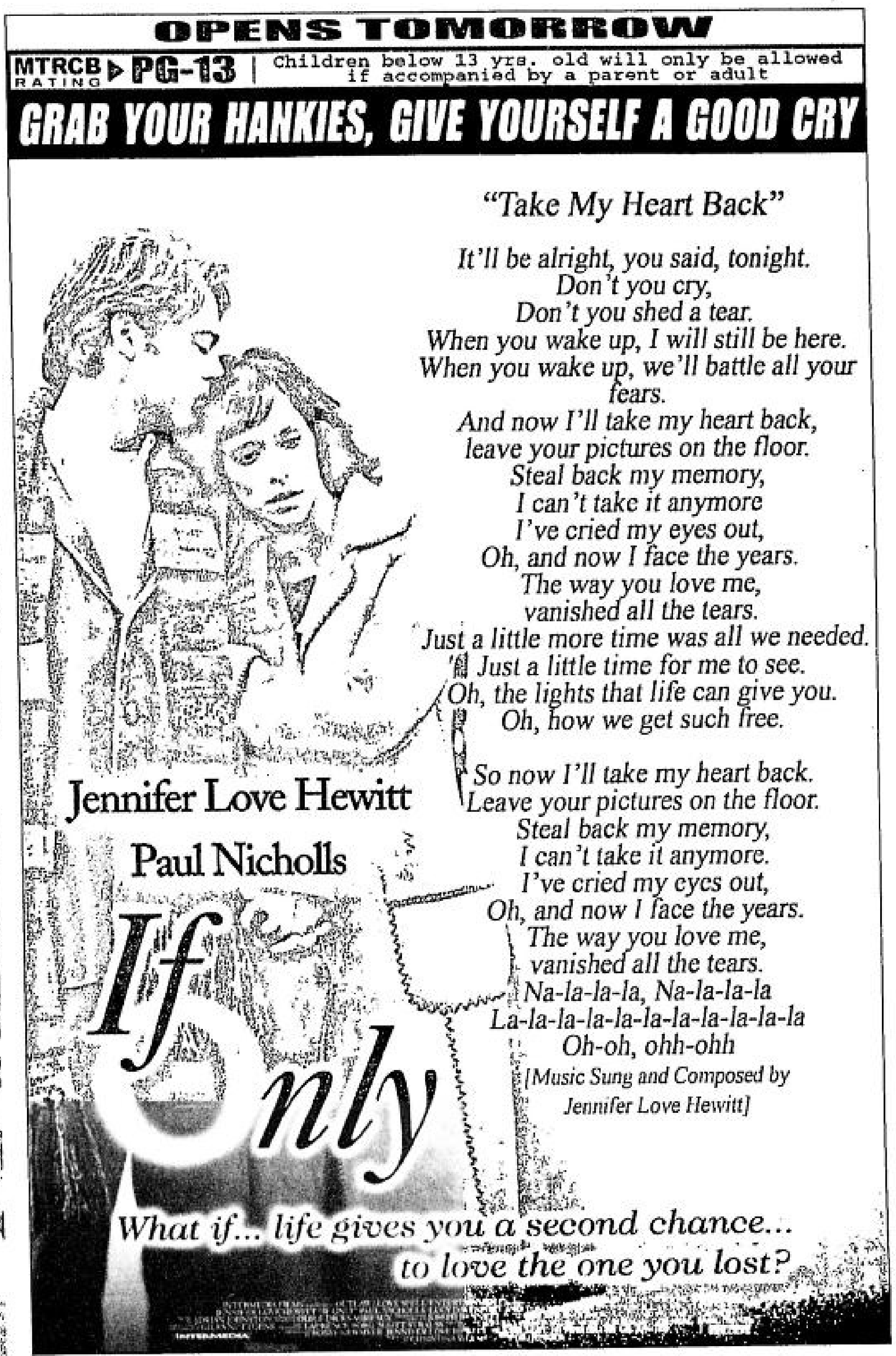
THE YEAR'S #1 ROMANTIC COMEDY


OPENS TOMORROW
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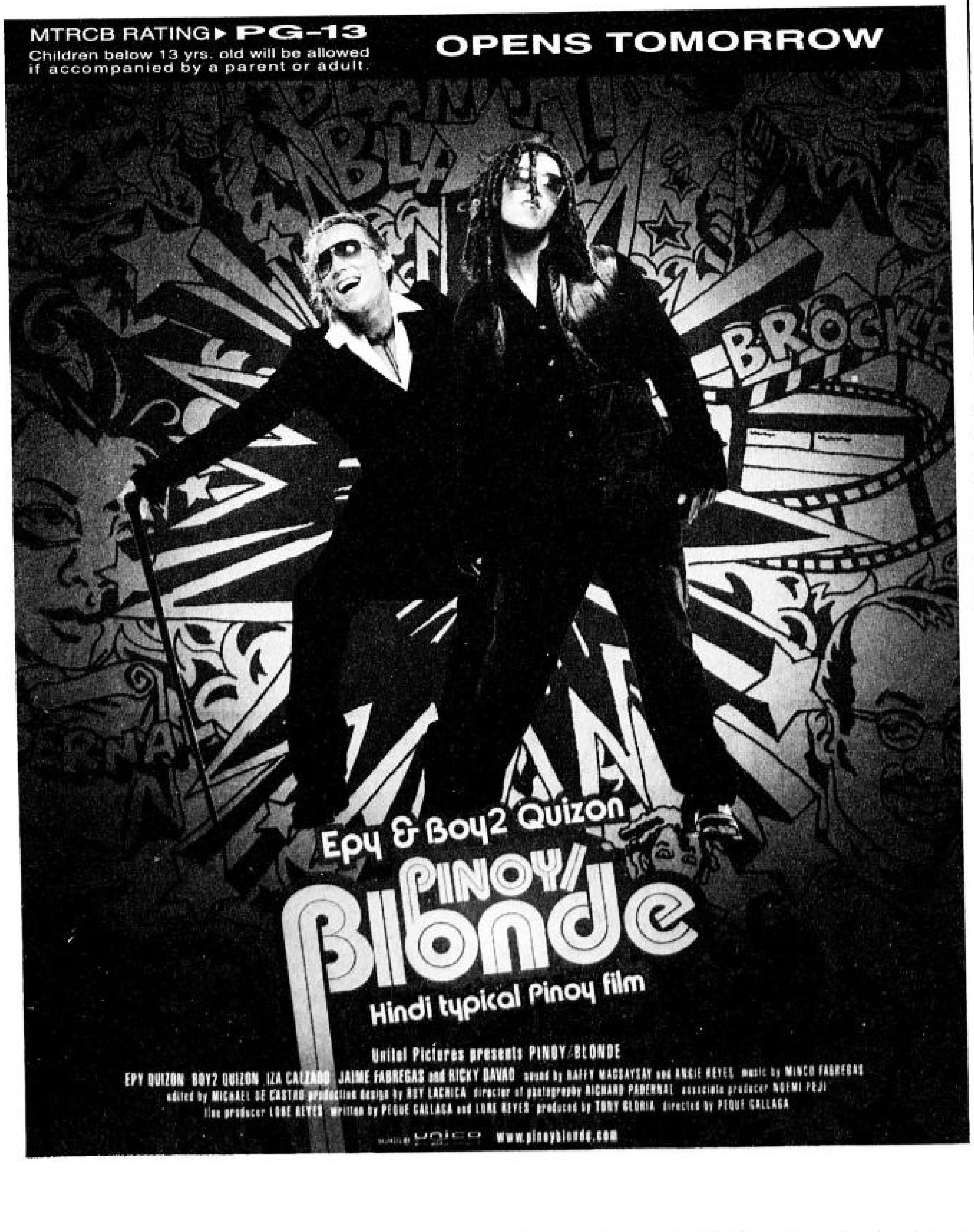
GRAB YOUR HANKIES, GIVE YOURSELF A GOOD CRY

"Take My Heart Back"

It'll be alright, you said, tonight.
Don't you cry,
Don't you shed a tear.
When you wake up, I will still be here.
When you wake up, we'll battle all your fears.
And now I'll take my heart back,
leave your pictures on the floor.
Steal back my memory,
I can't take it anymore
I've cried my eyes out,
Oh, and now I face the years.
The way you love me,
vanished all the tears.
Just a little more time was all we needed.
Just a little time for me to see.
Oh, the lights that life can give you.
Oh, how we get such free.

So now I'll take my heart back.
Leave your pictures on the floor.
Steal back my memory,
I can't take it anymore.
I've cried my eyes out,
Oh, and now I face the years.
The way you love me,
vanished all the tears.
Na-la-la-la, Na-la-la-la
La-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la-la
Oh-oh, ohh-ohh
[Music Sung and Composed by Jennifer Love Hewitt]

Jennifer Love Hewitt
Paul Nicholls
If Only
What if... life gives you a second chance... to love the one you lost?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edited by MICHAEL DE CASTRO production design by ROY LACHICA director of photography RICHARD PADERNAL associate producer NOEMI PEJI
line producer LORE REYES written by PEQUE GALLAGA and LORE REYES produced by TONY GLORIA directed by PEQUE GALLAGA
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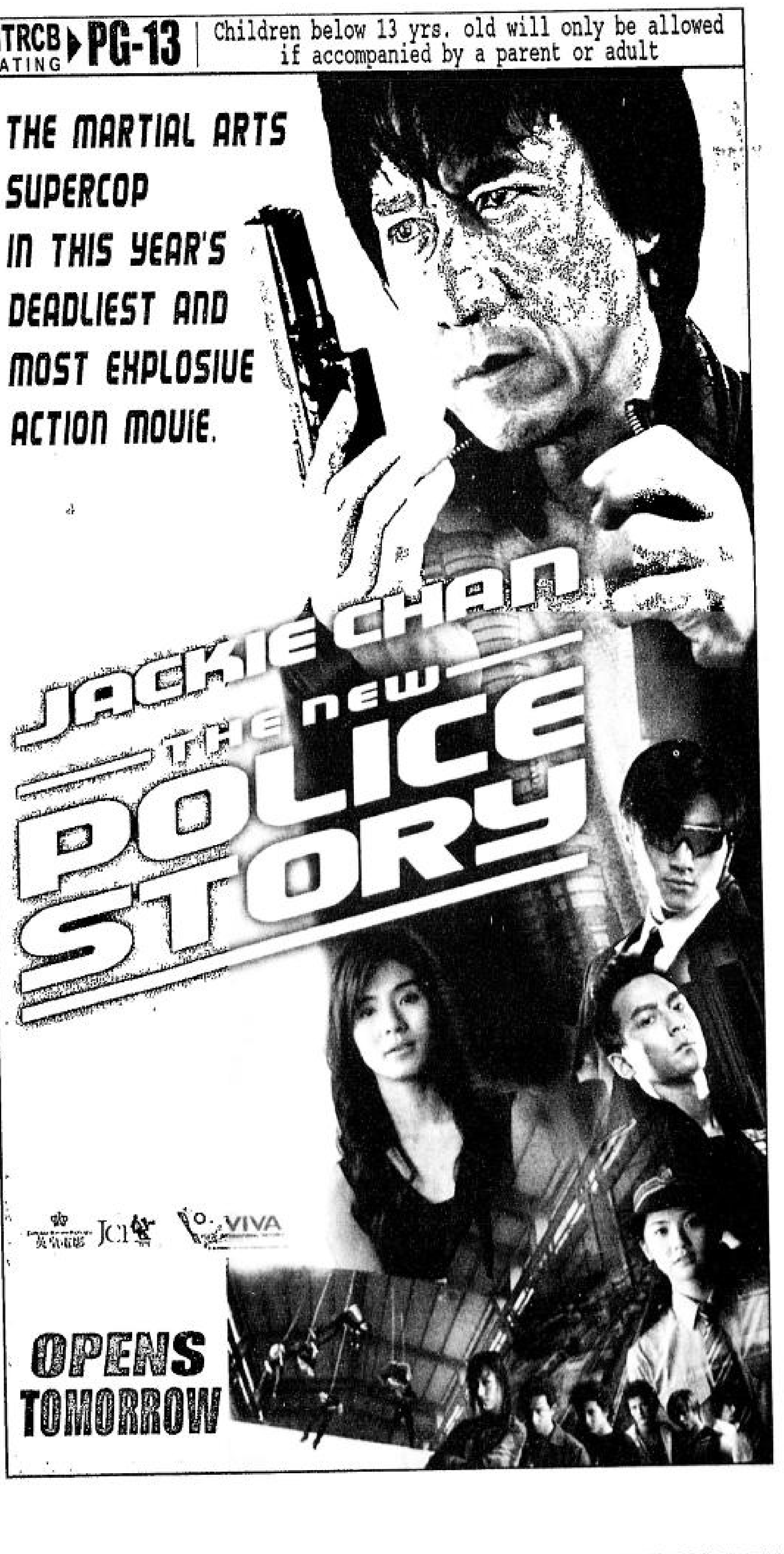
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JACKIE CHAN
THE NEW POLICE STORY
JCI
VIVA
OPENS TOMORROW

COCO Martin with Katherine Luna as the young lovers in "Masahista"

Not so deep, but riveting

By Ruben M. Cruz Jr.
Contributor

A SMALL, knowing film but with an underwhelming overview, "Masahista" is about a young male prostitute who works in a gay massage parlor somewhere in Quezon City. Iliac, played with baby-faced naiveté by Coco Martin, works as a "masseur" but he has no illusions about what his business entails. For him, giving massages is just another way of selling sex, and he accepts working as a prostitute the way other kids might accept working as waiters in fast-food joints.

All of his clients are gay but Iliac himself is not. At least, the film doesn't give the slightest hint that he is. He's in it only for the money. He does have a girlfriend (Katherine Luna), also a prostitute, although their relationship seems fleeting.

Flat and slow

I would like to give you an idea of the plot but there's not much. Poet, playwright and multi-awarded storyteller Nic Pichay was bored. The film had a narrative, he said, but not a story.

Overall, "Masahista" does feel flat and slow. The screenplay lacks dramatic drive and fails to fully explore potentially rich themes, like the pain and self-loathing that Iliac must be suffering for having been abandoned by his father. We can surmise that Iliac's life is a mess from some furtive flashbacks, some rambling dialogue, and a crying scene that, Nic thought, should have been Coco's acting moment. But it was too dark for us to tell if he was any good. Most of the time, the film leaves the audience to make sense of what they see onscreen.

There is a pair of interesting personalities here—Iliac's girlfriend and his mother (played by Jacklyn Jose)—but neither is accorded enough screen time to do more than briefly command attention.

First-time director Brillante Mendoza worked as an award-winning production designer in previous films. He obviously has a strong visual sense. In "Masahista" he offers a matter-of-fact look at male prostitution, not a sanitized, sanctioned view of whoredom.

Mendoza invests in images that give the audience a sense of Iliac's aimless longing and desperation, sometimes even reminding us

NOT SO/ A25

Short cuts

Six young filmmakers open the Cinemalaya Film Festival today

By Bayani San Diego Jr.

THEY did it—from left, Anna Isabelle Matutina, Monster Jimenez (Joel Ruiz's film editor), Lawrence Fajardo, Pam Miras and Sigrid Andrea Bernardo. Not in photo is Rommel Tolentino.

BESTING over a hundred entries, six filmmakers have made the final cut in the short film (15 to 20 minutes) category of the Cinemalaya Independent Film Festival and Competition.

The festival gathers a diverse group united by a love for cinema.

The six shorts premiering at the Cinemalaya tonight are: "Alimuom" by Rommel Tolentino; "Babae" by Sigrid Andrea Bernardo; "Blood Bank" by Pam Miras; "Kultado" by Lawrence Fajardo; "Mansyon" by Joel Ruiz, and "Panaginipan" by Anna Isabelle Matutina.

Hurdles

All six encountered a variety of problems which they solved by simply being creative.

Miras juggled directing and her job at a call center. "I was working full time," Miras recalls. "I often came in at half day or not at all, just to get the work done."

Fortunately, she had help from friends. "Everyone generously lent video and post-production equipment for free."

The budget (or lack of it) was another hurdle.

"My script demanded a certain glossiness and grandeur," Ruiz says. "That meant expensive. I used my life savings and was completely broke after the shoot." The "kindness" of family and friends pulled him through. "They donated time . . . and money."

Four years

His movie took four years to make. It helped that his parents' house ("a part of which was damaged by a fire" later) served as main location.

Location, location, location was also Bernardo's quandary, especially since she was shooting literally on the wrong side of the tracks.

"It's very difficult to shoot in a squatters' area," Bernardo admits. "Even small scenes seemed big. But because I was surrounded by friends . . . the work load was lighter, the shoot more fun."

Matutina similarly faced cash-flow problems, which she tried to fix in pre-production.

She says the biggest challenge was casting. "I couldn't afford professional actors and wasn't that well-connected in the indie community at that time."

Matutina took a chance on the people she knew best. "I persuaded my housemates even though they didn't have any acting background. I thought it should be easy because they fitted my characters' profiles. We worked nonstop for 20 hours, but we pulled it off."

Like most of her cast and crew, she was a greenhorn. Thankfully, she had an experienced cinematographer, Ogi Sugatan. "One daytime scene we had to shoot at night," she recounts. "We did it, thanks to the brilliance of our cinematographer."

Because Fajardo chose Bacolod as setting, "fixing everyone's conflicting schedules" was an ordeal. "Good thing most of the cast and crew—former coworkers and classmates—were from there. They did it for love!"

Jun Aves, director of photography, flew in from Manila. "He even lent his equipment and services for free," Fajardo notes. "In fact, he paid for his own airfare and his gaffer's."

Tolentino's location, "a claustrophobic apartment," presented a major obstacle.

"We ended up in the basement of my associate producer," Tolentino relates.

Nightmare

Scheduling was another nightmare. In fact, Tolentino lost his original lead, movie actor Simon Ibarra (of "Live Show"), because of a mixup.

A good friend, fellow judo practitioner Carlos Quismundo, filled in at the last minute.

"Carlos was willing to lose two days of sleep for the film," Tolentino recounts.

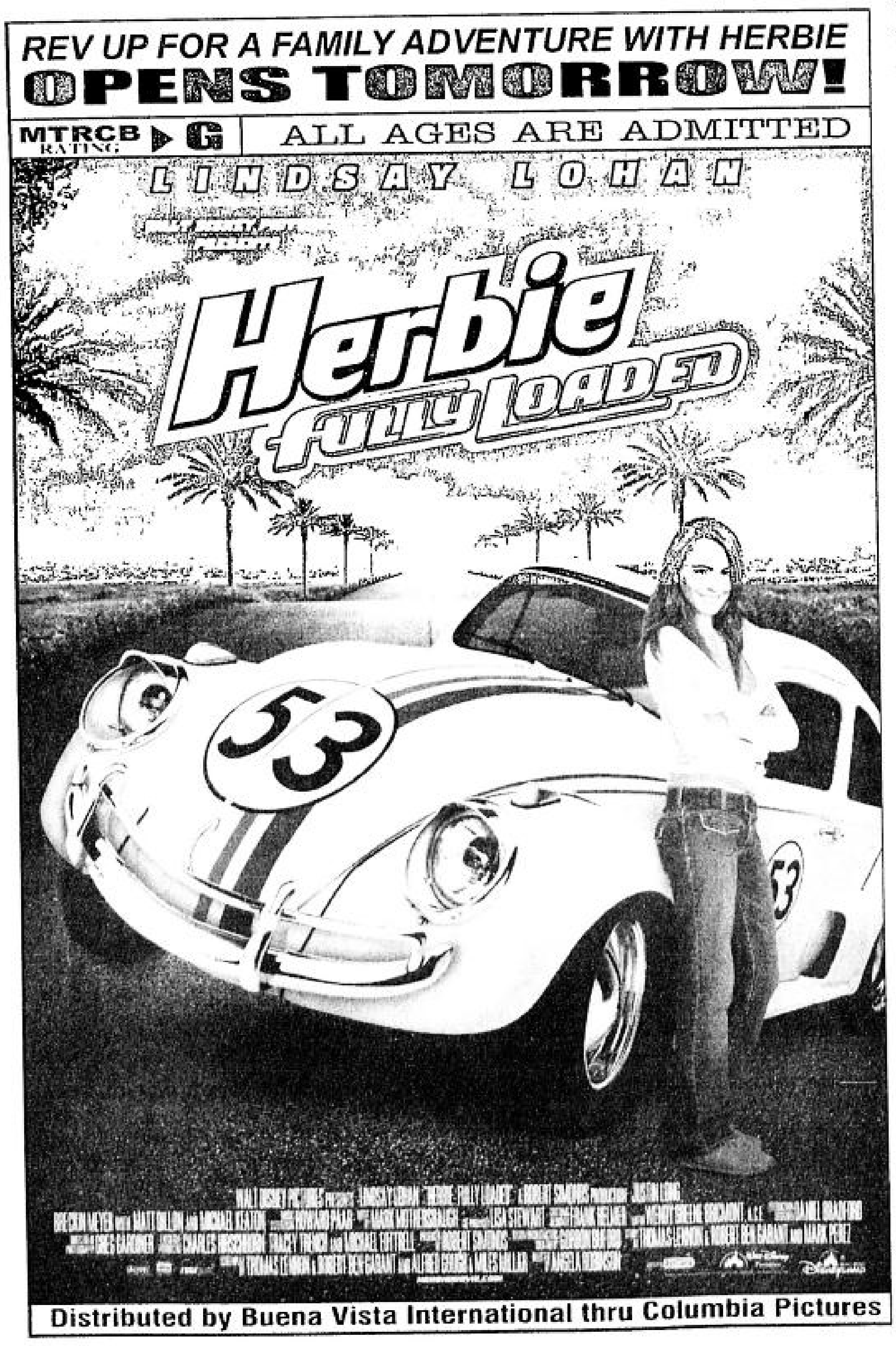
After all that stressful work, the filmmakers heaved a collective sigh of relief.

"I am proud of what I and my talented cast and crew have made," Miras beams.

"We all felt accomplished," Bernardo agrees. "Ninety percent of the staff was new. This film was our little experiment."

"It felt surreal," Matutina says. "I had been dreaming of making my

SHORT/ A23



REV UP FOR A FAMILY ADVENTURE WITH HERBIE
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MTRCB RATING ▶ G ALL AGES ARE ADMITTED
LINDSAY LOHAN
Herbie Fully Loaded
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Writer of beautiful new Vietnam film is Filipino

BAI Ling stars in "The Beautiful Country."

LOS ANGELES—SABINA Murray, who has a Filipino mother and American father, wrote the screenplay of the new movie on Vietnam, "The Beautiful Country."

Ambitious, lyrical and sweetly sad, the movie is a true hands-across-the-water effort, both with its cast and crew and with its far-ranging scope.

Mesmerizing

Norwegian director Hans Petter Moland has put together an often mesmerizing story of a "bui doi," or "less than dust," a term applied to outcast Vietnamese children of American fathers.

Writer Murray drew on her own experiences as daughter of a Filipino woman and American father in crafting a compelling chronicle with a quietly iron-willed protagonist.

The film powerfully explores cultural prejudices lingering from the Vietnam War and the yearning that drives an abandoned child to seek his parents and secure a sense of belonging.

Throughout the film, Binh (played by newcomer Damien Nguyen) endures an endless succession of social structures that leave him alienated and downtrodden. With no clues to his origin save a photo of an American GI and a Vietnamese woman holding a baby, Binh has been raised in stoic servitude by a foster family that treats him like an unwanted, burdensome relation.

Binh is called "Pigface" and forced to eat apart from others. Mothers tell their children to avoid him, because he has the face of the enemy.

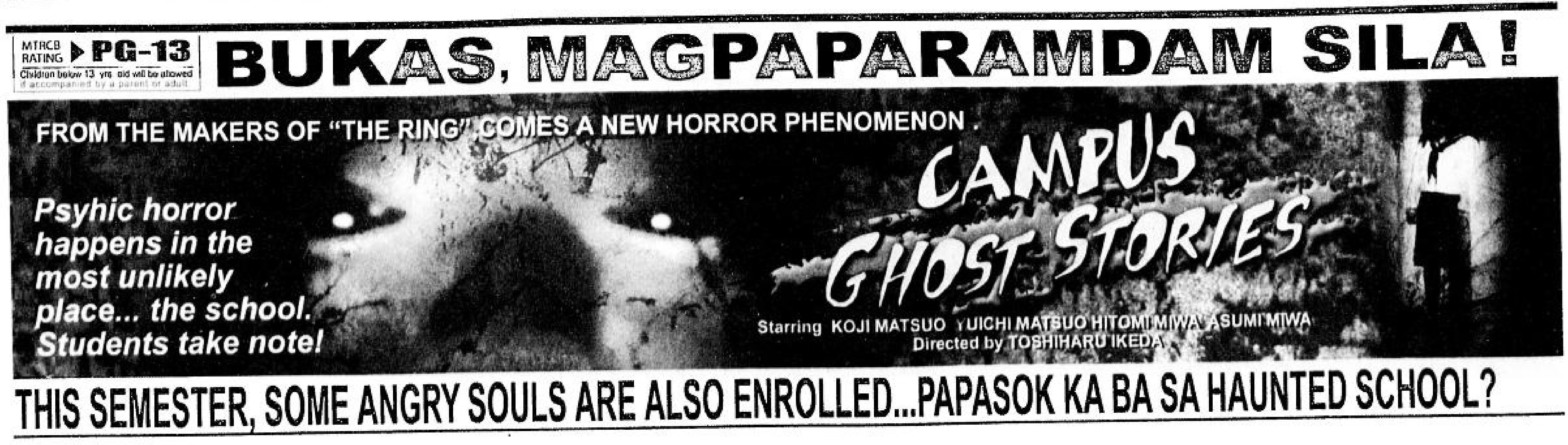
As a young man in 1990, Binh learns his mother, Mai (Thi Kim Xuan), is alive in Saigon, and he sets out for a tearful reunion.

Dreamscape

The film was shot in Vietnam, New York and Texas, each contributing their own vistas of "beautiful country" through cinematography by Stuart Dryburgh that alternates between dreamscape and grimy reality.

Much of the time, Binh is accompanied by a beautiful Chinese woman, Ling (Bai Ling), who sells her body as her means to a better life. Binh and Ling's delicate relationship—they're not quite lovers, not quite siblings, definitely more than friends—carries him through much misery and cruelty.

Binh encounters ugliness, greed, corruption, but also beauty, understanding, kindness and deep compassion along the way. He's richer for the journey. So are we. *David Germain, AP*



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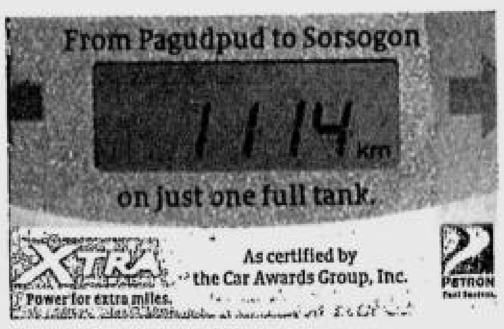
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T-bill rates rise; 91-day rate at 6.173%

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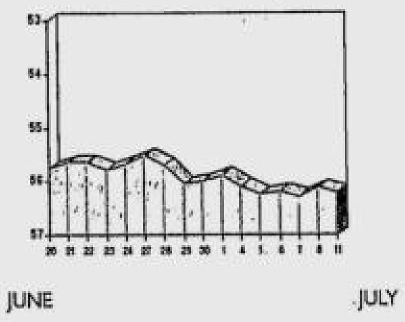

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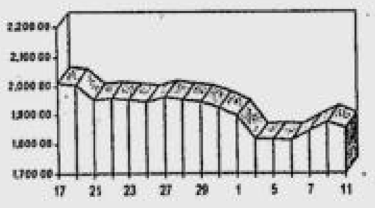
STOCK MARKET

Shares fall on Fitch downgrade, political woes



STOCKS fell yesterday, hurt by the prospect of a protracted political crisis and a decision by Fitch Ratings to downgrade the outlook for the country's credit rating.

The 30-company Philippine Stock Exchange Index dropped 23.50 points, or 1.3 percent, to 1,852.78, snapping a two-day run that saw the market gain 3.5 percent.

The broader All Shares Index finished 13.45 points lower at 1,135.24. Losers beat gainers 45 to 11, with 32 shares unchanged.

Except for the financial subindex, which gained on the strength of the Bank of the Philippine Islands, and the unchanged oil sector, all other sectoral indicators retreated.

Blue chips Ayala Land, SM Prime Holdings and Ayala Corp. led the decliners. Ayala Land declined 4.1 percent to P7.10, SM Prime retreated 2.7 percent to P7.10, while Ayala Corp. lost 2.6 percent to P280. *AP*

WHAT'S INSIDE

Farm goods to get 30% off on fees/B3
BEARBULL/B4
Farmers to tap SMC dividends/B3

Bids reflect market's nervousness

By Michelle V. Remo

INTEREST rates on short-term government securities rose sharply yesterday, although bids for one-year treasury bills were rejected for the fifth consecutive auction as uncertainty over the sustainability of the government's fiscal reforms was fueled last week by the resignation of key economic officials.

The bellwether 91-day treasury bill rate rose by 28 basis points to 6.173 percent, while the yield of the 182-day debt instrument surged 60.9 basis points to 7.54 percent. (One percentage point is equivalent to 100 basis points.)

All bids for the 364-day government securities were rejected, with the Bureau of Treasury explaining that the market did not show much appetite for it anyway. Volume of bids for the one-year bills reached only P2.12 billion, a level the Treasury said was low considering the high market liquidity.

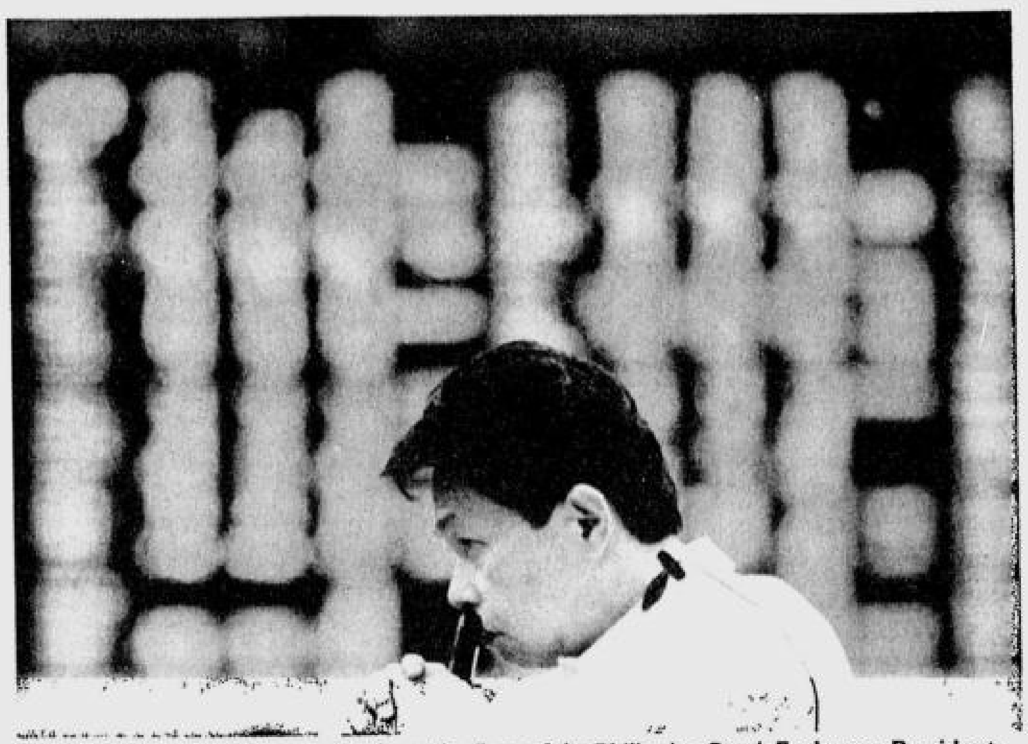
National Treasurer Omar Cruz said the Treasury decided to allow rates for the three- and six-month bills to rise to reflect market conditions.

He explained that a rise in interest rates should only be deemed unacceptable if market appetite, as shown by the volume of bids, was weak. The three- and six-month bills were substantially oversubscribed, thus reflecting strong market demand.

Tenders for the 91-day bills reached P4.5 billion, while that for the 182-day government securities stood at P3.3 billion. The government's debt offering for each maturity was P2 billion.

"The higher rates were accepted because it should not be us setting the rates, but the market. For the three- and six-month (T-bills), the market has set their rates as reflected in

T-BILL/ B4



A TRADER monitors the market from the floor of the Philippine Stock Exchange. President Macapagal-Arroyo was seen as having won crucial breathing space on Monday after Catholic bishops declined to call on her to quit, but investors fretted the decision may prolong her worst crises. Adding to concerns about the economic impact, ratings agency Fitch said early on Monday it had cut its outlook on Philippine debt to negative because the political crises may hurt efforts to cut its debt burden. REUTERS

Gov't may revive tax on text

THE DEPARTMENT of Finance said it might be left with no choice but to revive the equally unpopular proposal of taxing text messaging and implement an across-the-board increase in import duties if the suspension of the expanded value-added tax law would not be lifted immediately.

Finance Assistant Secretary Gil Beltran said the government could not afford to let time pass without coming up with an alternative to the E-VAT because of the urgency of the need to put the fiscal house in order.

"The tax on text messaging is also an unpopular proposal, but we would have no choice (but to push for it), unless we want the economy to fall down," Beltran said in a briefing.

The DOF earlier estimated that with the suspension of the E-VAT law, considered the administration's key revenue-raising measure to address the fiscal problem, the government stood to lose P130 million to P165 million daily in potential revenues.

The DOF said the E-VAT law could generate as much as P31 billion in the second half of the year, and P105 billion annually starting next year. The law basically expanded the coverage of the tax to include oil and electrici-

GOV'T/ B4

JULY 1-31, 2005.

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IT IS CRISIS time in Malacañang. All items on the national agenda must now concern the survival, and only the very survival, of this cute administration of Gloriaettta.

In other words, uh-oh, out of the Palace window goes everything, including that much-needed but politically perilous e-VAT!

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

As you probably learned from most opinion makers in media that have a combined IQ equal to a full-size head of cabbage, Gloriaetta has a so-called crisis group.

In their crisis brainstorming, that group is now trying to decide what to advice Gloriaetta, among other possible survival tactics, regarding the Romulo question.

Luli, for one, who is the daughter of Gloriaetta, said to be the most endearing of the Arroyo children, works for one of the several foundations of Roberto Romulo.

He was the foreign affairs secretary during the Ramos administration, where Kuya Eddie actually fired him. But then he was appointed as adviser to this cute administration in the same area of foreign affairs. Imagine that.

Today Bob Romulo is said to be the "verdugo" (i.e., assassin) of the notorious Go family in the problematic Equitable PCI Bank.

That's the item on the Palace agenda.

* * *

AS MEMBERS of the SSS and GSIS, numbering 26 million or so, we actually poured in some P16 billion of our retirement, death benefits, and disability funds into Equitable PCI Bank.

In other words, that is money that we paid for with our blood, no less, and today, six years after we "invested" it, we have nothing to show for it.

As we all know, the partner of GSIS and SSS in the acquisition of the former PCIBank is the Go family. PCIBank was merged with the Go family's Equitable Bank.

Incidentally, the Go family did not bother to put in a single centavo in the joint venture with SSS and GSIS, which both contributed our hard cash.

The Go family simply used the money of the bank, the very same bank we own, to cover for the family's P16-billion stake in the joint venture.

In effect, the Go family is robbing us—all of the 26 million or so members of the GSIS and the SSS—by using the money of the bank to slam their way to its control.

And this Bob Romulo is helping the Go family control the bank, supposedly by providing them the political connection, even if they are on the wrong side.

* * *

WELL, it looks that way, at least to us down here, who happen to be among the 26 million members of the SSS and the GSIS.

But the big money question is, how close is this Bob Romulo really to Gloriaetta personally? Does he use other people in the Palace such as Tom Alcantara?

Well, word is going around that Bob Romulo is also dropping the name of presidential daughter Luli in his protection racket.

And that, ladies and gentlemen, is what worries the Malacañang crisis committee. They do not want millions of SSS and GSIS members to shout the magic words: "Resign, resign, resign!"

* * *

NOW, the brother of Bob Romulo is actually the head of the Makati Business Club, or MBC, who is none other than lawyer Ricardo Romulo.

Only a few days ago, the MBC did to Gloriaetta what it did to the man named Band … Wrist Band. And that was, it said the magic word, "resign."

It turned out that the MBC issued the position to media, even without consulting its members.

Coincidentally, Dick Romulo used to be the chair of Equitable PCI, during its crisis of severe "bank run" right after the ouster of Wrist Band.

Up to this day, his law firm, Romulo Mabanta Buenaventura, still gets a lot of business from the Go family, particularly regarding Equitable PCI.

And what can that tell the Malacañang crisis group? Well, it seems that the Romulo brothers are playing both sides of the political game.

Either way the political tide goes, the brothers win.

* * *

BOB Romulo heads the three "independent" directors in Equitable PCI that are keeping the Go family in control of the bank.

They are, aside from Bob Romulo, former Ambassador Cesar Bautista, and former diplomat Tony Basilio. It is said that Bob Romulo "recruited" the other two.

With the five board seats of the Go family, which they got by not putting up a single centavo in the joint venture, the "independents" make up the majority in the board.

What are the SSS and the GSIS doing about this? Well, only the GSIS is determined enough to stop this foolishness. The SSS acts like an innocent bystander.

SSS president Cora de la Paz sits in the Equitable PCI board. She was also elected head of the International Social Security Association, which is based abroad.

That's why she has been busy traveling abroad lately, even when the SSS is getting clobbered in the Equitable PCI board meetings, mostly regarding our investment there.

* * *

PRIVATELY, De la Paz has been intimating to people her close personal friendship with the Romulo brothers, both Bob and Dick.

Whether or not that's the reason why the SSS failed to discover the P16-billion scam done by the Go family on our bank, is hard to say.

But how could an expert auditor not have discovered what on the surface looked like an out and out fraud?

Look, it is all stated in the annual reports of the bank for the past six years.

By the way, De la Paz is also the treasurer of the MBC, and so it is possible that she also did not know about the MBC issuance of the magic word.

Do you think, boss, that De la Paz should resign from the SSS, before we lose everything in Equitable PCI? Me, too!

* * *

BECAUSE of the many problems besetting the bank, one of these days somebody can pick it up cheap, such as the lord bidder himself, taipan John Gokongwei Jr.

In fact, the Go family (with the "independents" of course) kept a swap deal with Gokongwei from the GSIS and the SSS.

The secret was that the Go family would swap the 10-percent "treasury shares" in Equitable PCI with Gokongwei's shares in the small Robinson's Savings Bank.

The Go family used more than P6 billion of the bank funds to pay partly for their

BREAKTIME/B3

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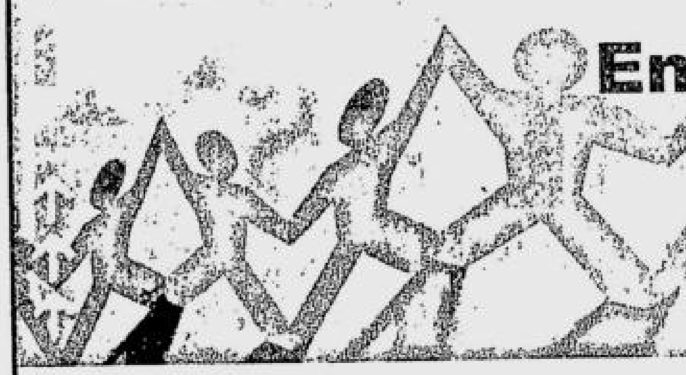

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Farm goods to get 30% discount on shipping fees

SHIPPING lines, cargo handlers and port operators are extending a 30-percent discount on their charges for agricultural products from Mindanao, the head of the Philippine Ports Authority yesterday said.

PPA general manager Oscar Sevilla said the government and various maritime groups from the private sector would soon sign an agreement that would cut cargo fees on farm products from the South.

"Farm products are rotting in Mindanao. We have to ship them out so they can be useful to the economy," Sevilla told reporters during yesterday's 31's anniversary celebration of the PPA.

Mindanao is a major producer of corn and other farm products like bananas and pineapples.

The discount, said Sevilla, was aimed at softening the impact of the increase in shipping and cargo handling fees arising from the imposition of the 10-percent value-added tax.

Sevilla said that even with the suspension of the VAT implementation, the government would push through with the program.

"This is just a temporary measure while the economy is going through a difficult period," the PPA chief said.

Aboitiz Transport Systems Corp., according to the PPA chief, had already cut its fees.

Sevilla said the maritime groups had been planning to sign the agreement earlier but it was stalled by recent political developments.

If it were up to him, Sevilla said he wanted shipping and cargo handling charges to remain regulated by the government.

However, he said other maritime agencies have agreed to deregulate the fee structure.

Sevilla said cargo handling rates in the country remained among the lowest in Asia.

During the first quarter, the PPA managed to post a 4-percent increase in its net income to P677.6 million, from P650 million a year ago , despite the lower number of cargo vessels that docked on government ports.

During the period, the agency's expenses declined to P647 million from P651 million last year.

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SMC seeking long-term loan worth $1B

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

SAN MIGUEL Corp. is working on securing a long-term loan from a consortium of banks to finance a $1.1-billion bridge loan, which was used to fund the company's acquisition of Australian dairy firm National Foods Ltd.

The bridge loan will fall due in December.

SMC sources said the company had also received offers from other banks that were not part of the said consortium.

SMC earlier said it would fund its acquisition of National Foods through a combination of debt and cash on hand. It has received loan commitments from ABN-Amro Bank N.V., Barclays Capital (the investment banking division of Barclays Bank PLC), The Hong Kong and Shanghai Banking Corp., Standard Chartered Bank and Sumitomo Mitsui Banking Corp. worth $1.1 billion (roughly A$1.85 billion).

Sources said another option for SMC was to refinance the bridge loan by issuing bonds. The company, however, was not seriously considering this option at this time.

Reuters quoted debt market publication Basis Point as saying that SMC was considering issuing bonds worth between $150 million and $350 million to fund its bridge loan facility.

Breaktime

From page B2

portion of the PCIBank shares in the joint venture with SSS and GSIS.

They simply parked the shares with EBC Investment, which later became known as "treasury shares," which they use up to now to keep control of the bank.

To end the controversy over the "treasury shares," the Go family (with the "independents" led by Bob Romulo) wanted to swap them with Gokongwei.

Before the secret deal was exposed, the documentation was already done by one of the big law firms—but not the Romulo Mabanta Buenaventura law firm.

* * *

AND that was what the Go family, with the help of Romulo's team of "independents," wanted to do with the P6 billion in bank funds.

You know, give it away for ... well, basically, nothing!

The "swap" gives Equitable PCI more of the same stuff. Robinson's Savings presumably will become another one of its subsidiaries.

Robinson's Bank has some 20 branches. What their value is to Equitable PCI, something that can enhance our investment, has not been discussed in the board.

But our bank, this same Equitable PCI, used to have subsidiaries called Mindanao Development Bank and Ecology Savings Bank.

Thus, in the past, our bank already closed down more than 70 branches of its two thrift banks—for nothing!

No, Ate Glo, they were not sold. They were just closed down.

And now the Go family wants the same bank to go into a "swap" with Gokongwei, and all just to gain more of the branches that it had closed earlier. Wow!

In short, our bank gets more of the same useless branches, in exchange for 10 percent shares in it, for which the Go family used more than P6 billion of our funds.

Methinks that the bank does not need a subsidiary with 20 branches. It needs cash, period.

After all, the SSS and GSIS put in P16 billion of our hard cash, as against the Go family's ... well, fond wishes.

* * *

BY THE WAY, the law firm that worked on the swap documentation was none other than Accra, not the Romulo Mabanta Buenaventura law firm.

Why did the Go family favor another law firm all of a sudden? Nobody knows.

That the in-law of the new Bangko Sentral Governor Armando Tetangco is connected with Accra, is only a coincidence, okay!

Now, the old Monetary Board was following close the whole shebang about Equitable PCI.

The present Monetary Board, with a lot of new faces, may still be in the dark.

I think that Tetangco has a lot of work to do to protect our money in the bank.

An Appeal for Fairness.

To the Owners, Editors, Writers, and Employees of the Philippine Daily Inquirer:

We are the surviving family of the late Mr. Go Kim Pah, the founder of Equitable PCI Bank, and we are addressing this appeal not just to your Editor-in-Chief but to all who constitute the Philippine Daily Inquirer as an institution – its owners, officers, editors, columnists, reporters, and employees.

For several months now, our family has been the subject of vicious, abusive, and unrelenting attack by Mr. Conrado Banal ("Breaktime") and Mr. Victor Agustin ("Cocktales") in the pages of your widely circulated and powerful paper. That the attacks are baseless seem to be of no concern to them and your Business Editor, for whenever we point out their errors, they just invent new ones or repeat old, baseless allegations.

The latest column of Mr. Banal (PDInquirer, 07 July 2005) is typical of their treatment of our family. It baldly alleges that an anomaly was committed in the merger-acquisition of PCIBank (PCIB) and Equitable Banking Corporation (EBC), and it accuses our family of manipulation, deceit, and fraud in making it happen. Yet, the facts about the merger show plainly that this is not true.

1. The merger of EBC and PCIB into Equitable PCI Bank (EPCIB) was made in accordance with existing laws and regulations, and no unscrupulous schemes were devised to perfect it. There was no way that our family could have dipped into the coffers of EBC and PCIB because both institutions were governed by responsible Boards, and the merger passed through arduous scrutiny from regulators before it was approved.
2. At the time of merger in May 1999, EBC, EBCII, GSIS, and SSS severally agreed to acquire the 72% stake in PCIB of the Lopez and Gokongwei families. Each agreed to put up funds and swap existing shares for PCIB shares. Prior to the merger, our family held approximately 55% shareholdings in EBC. EBC then had a capitalization of approximately P15.2 billion. When EBC swapped its shares for PCIB upon merger, the resulting shareholdings of our family in EPCIB, as the surviving bank, together with those of other shareholders of EBC, were reduced along with our proportionate share in the total capital of the Bank. This clearly belies Mr. Banal's allegation that "not a single centavo" was expended by us in the merger.
3. Mr. Banal's similarly lies when he writes that our family obtained a loan from JPMorgan to finance the acquisition of the PCIB shares. JPMorgan has categorically denied his allegation.
4. Mr. Banal lies when he says our family has been using EBCII-held shares to keep control over EPCIB. These EBCII-held shares are totally distinct from the shares held by our family. We have never voted in our favor the EBCII-held shares. Our nominees to the Bank's Board of Directors have been elected because of our shareholdings and the proxies voluntarily given by minority shareholders who have consistently given their support to the family since the Bank's founding in 1950.
5. Finally, Mr. Banal castigates our family for leading EPCIB while holding only 25.2% of the shares. But the fact is we are the single biggest private shareholder in the Bank; the next biggest is the family of Benjamin "Kokoy" Romualdez. Mr. Banal seems to think that the government should be running the Bank because our pension funds have more shares when combined. But this is contrary to the policy of privatization and the investment guideline that SSS and GSIS are prohibited from taking over the companies they invest in.

Like Mr. Agustin, Mr. Banal has not once allowed us to give our side on the issues he raises in his column. Not once have they given the merest recognition to the fact that our family has offered resources and service to the Bank from the time of its founding 55 years ago to the present. Not once have they acknowledged that we have made sacrifices and dedicated our lives to this institution which has served countless clients, helped our society, and reaped numerous awards and distinctions. Surely, no institution would have survived this long, weathered adversities, and thrived in prosperity if our family were as corrupt, scheming, and manipulative as they portray us to be. And certainly, the Bank would not be performing as well as it is doing now without good governance and leadership.

We know that there are legal ways to deal with the excesses of Messrs. Banal and Agustin, and we shall in due time take recourse to them. But for now, our main concern is to know whether the entire Inquirer family supports the kind of journalism Messrs. Banal and Agustin have been perpetrating in its pages, and whether you would also deny us fairness and objectivity as they do. For we believe, deep in our hearts, that the Inquirer is a much better newspaper than your two columnists make it out to be.

In short, we are asking you all to take a long, hard look at Messrs. Banal and Agustin's abusive campaign against our family. Start from the time of the SSS-BDO deal in December 30, 2003, whose exposure in the light ignited these attacks against us. Consider how we seem to be the only family and company they find worth writing about. Investigate why we are now being attacked daily as the hour of the EPCIB Stockholders Meeting on July 19 draws near, and who stands to profit from this campaign of vilification against us. Then you can decide whether their journalism is the kind that the Philippine Daily Inquirer can be proud of.

We can only hope that all these indignities we have suffered are not caused by our refusal to bow to the will of those who seek control of Equitable PCI Bank. For if it were so, it will indeed be a supreme irony considering that Mr. Go Kim Pah was one of those who helped the Sy family to lay the foundations of their business empire.

Thank you for your kind attention.

Yours sincerely,

PETER GO PAILIAN
Chairman Emeritus
Equitable PCI Bank

Tony G
ANTONIO L. GO
Chairman
Equitable PCI Bank

Moving toward a parliamentary system?

MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

I AM NOT going over the events of the past week as I am sure you have read them in the newspaper and watched them on TV. Naturally, I am very pleased that former President Ramos has put forward a timetable to turn the bicameral system into a parliamentary system within a year. I don't know if he read my article last week and I doubt whether I will ever find out. Apparently, GMA favors it even though it means that she will stand down next May, if she survives that long. Obviously, she won't run, but FVR might.

I doubt whether it will happen because if they adopt the British Parliamentary system as it is, there will be no pork, only a salary plus expenses. The $64,000 question, or in this case, the P200 million question, is whether the legislators would be willing to give up their pork. If they were willing to do so, it would be good for the country and reduce corruption in government. The countries, which have forged ahead, are China, Russia, the UK, Singapore and Malaysia, all with strong leaders.

GMA has survived for now with the help of FVR and the Bishops, but the forces ranged against her will not give up, so expect more rallies, new evidence and more pressure to be exerted. This will mean a weak peso, an increase in bond yields and an unpredictable, volatile stock market.

I wish all the different factions would stop fighting each other and do something constructive instead. For example, since the Philippine government does not wish to default on its overseas obligations but after paying interest on its huge debt, it has no money for infrastructure, health and education, It has a strong case for asking its debtors to extend a 3-year grace period. This means that for the next 3 years, the government will have the money to create jobs and improve the lives of the people, especially in the provinces.

Since the debt would be extended by 3 years but all the interest ultimately paid, I believe the debtor nations would be sympathetic to our plight. It is preferable to defaulting and the debtor nations know this. We should also stop paying interest on the mothballed nuclear power station as the price was grossly inflated and there was a lot of corruption involved. We have already paid the principal twice over in interest payments. Enough is enough. These two steps, if approved, would greatly lessen our immediate problems and give whatever government is in power, a much-needed breathing space.

I always compare the Philippines to Thailand, as we are very similar in many ways. The people look the same and eat the same food except that Thais use more spices. The countries are similar in size and our populations are comparable. Ten years ago, our economies were similar, living standards about the same, and the peso and baht were almost at parity to each other.

But now, we are far behind and the baht has appreciated by 30 percent against the peso. I have visited Thailand many times, including our lucky escape last Christmas when we were not able to get a plane to Phuket. Bangkok and Manila look the same except for the numerous Buddhist temples. Hotel prices are similar but food in the malls and restaurants is slightly cheaper. The people dress the same, earn about the same and have a comparable standard of living.

However, there are some huge differences. Their infrastructure outside Bangkok is fantastic. The roads are so good that you can travel from Bangkok to Pattaya in 1-1/2 hours. Nowhere in the Philippines could you cover a similar distance in so short a time. As for their tourist industry, last year they had almost 12 million visitors even after the tsunami cancellations. That is about 6 times as many as we had.

Their stock market trades 450 stocks a day to our 100, and they have 30 mutual funds and 50 warrants. Their daily turnover is far in excess of our stock market. Why should this be so?

Thailand has never been colonized so the race is pure and there is only one language instead of 73 dialects. Their landmass is one, stretching from Myanmar in the North to Malaysia in the South, whereas we have more than 7,000 islands. This has enabled them to build a nationwide rail service and I have traveled from Bangkok to Changmai, the northern capital up in the mountains by train. We are about 100 years behind in this respect.

They have a parliamentary system, and a strong no-nonsense Prime Minister Thaksin. In January 2004, the country was faced with a huge drug problem involving most of the university students. In the space of 2 weeks, 2,500 drug dealers and pushers were shot dead. Officially, it was attributed to gang warfare but nobody was charged. The Thai newspapers, which have freedom of speech, applauded the Prime Minister for exterminating the vermin and he was reelected with a decisive majority.

Thailand also has a King Bhumibol Adulyadej (Rama IX). He is much loved by all the people and he is always giving to the poor. When the survivors in Phuket and the other islands were left homeless, the King sent aid to the beleaguered people immediately without waiting for overseas help. So highly is he regarded that the Thais do not celebrate New Year. Instead, they save their celebrations and firework displays for the King's birthday.

Apart from successfully promoting tourism and exporting rice, the government concentrated on the rural areas and set up cottage industries, usually through cooperatives. In Changmai, the people produce millions of brightly colored paper umbrellas, which are sold in huge quantities at 100 baht each. They also produce beautiful filigree silver necklaces and bracelets from the nearby silver mines. The people are creative, artistic and produce much of their own merchandise instead of importing it from China.

Their success stems from having a strong leader, a parliamentary system, no religious interference, and the ability to identify as one nation. Here, people still identify themselves as Ilocano, Tagalog, Cebuano, Bisaya, Bicolano, and so on. There is no national unity and in the home, no national language.

This senseless, wasteful bickering has to stop. An independent body should be appointed to study how Thailand achieved its success. There is much that we can learn from them and apply to our own country so that the lives of the people will be uplifted.

In the United States, the number of jobs created was 100,000 higher than the previous month so the DOW rose 146 points. The unemployment rate is down to 5 percent and the FED will continue raising rates.

Fitch has just downgraded our debt-rating outlook from stable to negative, citing political concerns and a court freeze on VAT that could derail the country's economic reforms. We must move quickly to a unicameral system if we are to survive. *mrbearbull@hotmail.com*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of Monday, July 11, 2005)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco De Oro Univ. Bank	30	30	30	30	88,300
Bank of the Phil. Islands	46	46.5	45.5	46.5	4,089,300
China Banking Corp.	770	770	770	770	2,010
Citystate Savings Bank	17.5	17.5	17.5	17.5	300
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.51	0.51	0.51	.51	20,000
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	48.5	48.5	48.5	48.5	172,800
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	27.5	27.5	26.5	27	667,100
Philippine National Bank	41.5	41.5	41	41	115,700
Security Bank Corp.	27	27	26	26	113,400
Union Bank of the Phil.	28	28	28	28	17,400
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Manulife Financial Corp.	2700	2700	2700	2700	1,910
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1	1.02	1	1.02	110,000
Sun Life Financial, Inc.	1920	1930	1920	1930	2,050
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
ABS-CBN Broadcasting Corp	12	12	11	11.25	103,000
Digital Telecom Phils Inc	0.98	0.99	0.97	.98	322,000
Globe Telecom, Inc.	810	810	795	795	51,100
Ipeople Inc.	3.5	3.55	3.5	3.55	34,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.6	2.6	2.5	2.55	1,174,000
Transpacific Broadcast	1.38	1.38	1.38	1.38	20,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1595	1600	1585	1595	474,110
Philweb Corp.	0.016	0.016	0.015	.015	10,100,000
POWER, ENERGY & OTHER UTILITIES					
Manila Electric Co. B	23	23.25	22.75	23	465,600
Manila Water Co., Inc.	6.2	6.2	6.1	6.2	1,460,000
Petron Corp.	2.75	2.8	2.75	2.8	2,317,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	7.2	7.2	7.2	7.2	169,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	1.04	1.04	1.04	1.04	50,000
Holcim Philippines, Inc.	2.75	2.9	2.7	2.9	752,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	29	29.5	29	29.5	107,000
Jollibee Foods Corp.	28.5	31	28.5	31	460,100
San Miguel Corp. A	59.5	59.5	59.5	59.5	53,200
San Miguel Corp. B	93	93	91.5	92.5	101,900
Universal Robina Corp.	16	16	15.75	15.75	96,900
Vitarich Corp.	0.26	0.26	0.26	0.26	750,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Ayala Corp.	280	280	270	280	152,660
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	4.65	4.7	4.65	4.7	460,000
Ajo.Net Holdings, Inc.	0.023	0.023	0.022	.022	2,700,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.84	1.84	1.82	1.82	3,923,000
ATN Holdings, Inc.	1.5	1.6	1.5	1.6	22,000
Banpres Holdings Corp.	1	1.02	0.98	1	16,541,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.24	2.26	2.24	2.26	954,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp	5.8	5.8	5.7	5.7	450,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp	40	40	38.5	39.5	972,000
Forum Pacific, Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	.12	40,000
Ionics Inc.	1.08	1.16	1.08	1.16	71,000
J.G. Summit Holdings, Inc	3.1	3.15	3.1	3.15	458,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.18	1.18	1.12	1.16	1,882,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.31	0.31	0.31	.31	5,440,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.19	0.19	0.18	.18	450,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.45	0.45	0.45	0.45	180,000
SM Investments Corp.	245	245	240	240	98,990
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.16	.16	2,540,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.185	0.185	0.185	0.185	100,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Picop Resources, Inc.	0.075	0.075	0.075	0.075	700,00
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	1	1	0.98	.98	7,784,00
Acesite Phils Hotel Corp.	5	5	5	5	4,00
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	1.1	1.1	0.99	1.06	3,130,00
Manila Jockey Club	3.1	3.1	3.1	3.1	20,00
Philippine Racing Club	3.5	3.5	3.5	3.5	50,00
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
Abs-Cbn Hldgs. Corp (Pdr)	11.75	11.75	11.25	11.25	598,40
PLDT (10% Pref) Series R	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	300
PLDT (10% Pref) Series X	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	2,100
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	7	7	7	7	3,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	7.3	7.3	7	7.1	15,670,000
Araneta Properties, Inc.	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	100,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.22	0.22	0.22	.22	920,000
Cebu Prop. Vent B	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	100,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.18	0.18	0.18	.18	3,700,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.32	0.33	0.32	.33	1,900,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.26	1.28	1.26	1.26	3,933,000
Highlands Prime Inc.	2.1	2.28	2.06	2.14	150,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	200,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	.12	340,000
Phil Realty and Holdings	0.18	0.18	0.18	0.18	230,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	7.2	7.2	7	7.1	8,438,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.007	0.007	0.0065	.0065	55,000,000
Atlas Cons Min & Dev't	4.8	4.8	4.7	4.7	76,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.3	0.31	0.3	.31	410,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.31	0.32	0.31	0.32	380,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	32,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.005	0.006	0.005	.0055	41,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.93	0.93	0.9	.92	350,000
Semirara Mining Corp.	27	28.5	27	27	119,300
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	100,000
OIL					
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	0.0055	2,000,000
Pacifica	0.009	0.009	0.009	0.009	17,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.55	2.55	2.55	2.55	120,000
Sinophil Corp.	0.12	0.125	0.12	.125	1,300,000

CURRENCIES

July 11, 2005 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.835561497	1.000000	56.3210
Japan	Yen	0.00745	0.008916	0.5022
United Kingdom	Pound	1.451537	1.737200	97.8408
Hong Kong	Dollar	0.107482	0.128634	7.2448
Switzerland	Franc	0.642938	0.769468	43.3372
Canada	Dollar	0.685729	0.820681	46.2216
Singapore	Dollar	0.49142	0.588132	33.1242
Australia	Dollar	0.618889	0.740686	41.7162
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.216461	2.652661	149.4005
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.222769	0.266610	15.0157
Brunei	Dollar	0.489979	0.586407	33.0270
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000085	0.000102	0.0057
Thailand	Baht	0.019856	0.023764	1.3384
UAE	Dirham	0.227518	0.272294	15.3359
Euro	Euro	1	1.196800	67.4050
Argentina	Peso	0.290883	0.348129	19.6070
Brazil	REAL	0.352706	0.422119	23.7742
Denmark	Kroner	0.134121	0.160516	9.0404
India	Rupee	0.019204	0.022983	1.2944
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.219896	0.263172	14.8221
Mexico	New Peso	0.077815	0.093129	5.2451
New Zealand	Dollar	0.561194	0.671637	37.8273
Norway	Kroner	0.126894	0.151867	8.5533
Pakistan	Rupee	0.014032	0.016793	0.9458
South Africa	Rand	0.121448	0.145349	8.1862
Korea	Won	0.000793	0.000949	0.0534
Sweden	Kroner	0.105878	0.126715	7.1367
Syria	Pound	0.016096	0.019264	1.0850
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.026038	0.031162	1.7551
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000389	0.000466	0.0262

US firm keen on packaging $2-B coal conversion project

By Abigail L. Ho

UNITED States Bank Corp., a sister company of Bank of America, is keen on packaging the $2-billion coal-to-fuel conversion project that American firm Headwaters Technology Innovations Group (HTIG) is undertaking.

Energy Undersecretary Peter Anthony Abaya said the bank was willing to cover the coal liquefaction project, as well as the local compressed natural gas (CNG) and liquefied natural gas (LNG) projects.

A number of financial institutions have expressed interest in participating in the financing of the coal-to-fuel conversion project, he said. These, he said, included International Risk Consultants Inc., UEA Financials Inc., JP Morgan, Citibank Group, US Export-Import Bank and Overseas Private Placement Corp.

Meetings had actually been scheduled with these financial institutions in the next several days, he related.

"The companies that will meet in Washington DC can syndicate (the necessary financing) for the project," he told reporters.

He said HTIG would present shortly the results of the first phase study of the coal-to-fuel conversion project to Abaya in Washington DC.

According to initial indications, he said Philippine coal seemed to have passed various tests conducted by HTIG on the suitability of local coal to liquefaction and fuel conversion.

The next step would be to tap other American fund sources such as the US Trade and Development Agency to help fund the project.

In an earlier interview, Antonio Ver, president and chief operating officer of HTIG local partner CPI Energy Companies, said an application for a technical assistance worth $1.5 million had been submitted to the US TDA.

The application initially came from CPI Energy, which then forwarded this to HTIG. The American firm would be the one to directly file the application with the US TDA.

The group is currently on the first step of a four-phase process that will lead to the establishment of a coal-to-fuel conversion facility either in Bataan or Batangas.

The planned facility is a commercial-sized plant capable of producing 50,000-70,000 barrels of fuel per day, as big as the one HTIG is currently putting up in China, in partnership with the Shenhua Group, China's largest coal company.

Step 1 involves defining what exactly the project is, drafting an economic overview that will determine the project's viability, conducting a detailed study of the prospective plant sites as well as the coal to be converted into various fuels, and determining what has to be done in the next three steps.

The next step will involve some experimental work, including experiments that will give the group an accurate number in terms of the prospective plant's fuel yield as well as an idea of what sort of fuels should be produced there.

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T-bill rates ...

From page B1

the volume of bids. If the rates they bid were up to those levels, then these were really where the market wanted to trade," Cruz said in a briefing after yesterday's weekly auction.

Jonathan Ravela, Banco de Oro's market strategist, said the move of banks to push interest rates higher was a response to several political and economic developments, including the Supreme Court's suspension of the expanded value-added tax law and the resignation of members of the government's economic team.

"The behavior of the market today was reflective of the market's nervousness due to continued uncertainty resulting from the political tensions," he said in an interview.

Ravelas said the TRO on the E-VAT, considered the cornerstone of the administration's fiscal reform agenda, was a big blow to its ability to achieve earlier projections of reducing the budget deficit to only P160 billion this year. The deficit stood at P187 billion last year.

He said it would be difficult for the government to convince the public that it could still focus on its economic reform programs when its energy was likely to be exhausted in surviving the political pressures against President Macapagal-Arroyo.

Last Friday, members of the economic team and other Cabinet officials resigned their posts as a show of disenchantment over the Arroyo leadership. The economic officials, whose resignations were feared to cripple the government's economic agenda, included Finance Secretary Cesar Purisima, Revenue Commissioner Guillermo Parayno Jr., Budget Secretary Emilia Boncodin, Customs Commissioner Alberto Lina and Trade and Industry Secretary Juan Santos.

Gov't may revive . . .

From page B1

ty, among others, and gave the President a standby authority to raise the VAT rate from 10 to 12 percent.

The Supreme Court issued a temporary restraining order on the implementation of the E-VAT, tagged by critics as anti-poor, following a petition filed by opposition lawmakers. The TRO took effect on July 1, its first day of effectivity.

Beltran said there could be no other measure to match the E-VAT in terms of amount of revenue potential, but the proposed "tax on text" and the increase in tariffs on all imported goods would be the best alternatives.

Earlier estimates showed that the proposed tax on text could yield as much as P13.78 billion in potential revenues a year if the government would impose a 20-centavo tax per text message.

The tax-on-text proposal, when it was first raised by the DOF, elicited strong opposition from consumer groups. The proposal also failed to get enough support from the legislature.

Beltran said the government could combine the tax-on-text proposal with the across-the-board increase in tariff rates to generate the additional revenues needed to achieve government projections of lowering its budget deficit to P160 billion this year, and reducing it to zero by 2008.

The DOF, however, has yet to come up with specific numbers as to how much tariff rates should be increased.

"We already did that (across-the-board hike in tariffs) during the Aquino administration. We could do it again this time with the pressing need to raise more revenues," Beltran said. *Michelle V. Remo*

TUESDAY, JULY 12, 2005

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The Provincial Government of Cebu, through its Bids and Awards Committee-Goods and Services (BAC-GS), hereby invites suppliers/contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the hereunder project:

Name of Project : SECURITY AND ESCORT SERVICES
Location : Cebu Provincial Detention and Rehabilitation Center (CPDRC), Kalunasan, Cebu City
Brief Description : To provide security guards to guard different posts at the entire CPDRC, escort guards to secure inmates to and from court hearings and/or hospitals, escort vehichels and necessary tools, equipment, security aids and materials.
Approved Budget for the Contract : Php 4,357,571.50
Contract Duration : August 16, 2005 to December 31, 2005 (4½ months)

Prospective bidders should have experience in undertaking a similar project within the last two (2) years with an amount of at least 50% of the proposed project for bidding, and have key personnel and equipment (owned, leased or under purchase) available for the prosecution of the project. The Eligibility Check/Screening as well as the Preliminary Examination of Bids shall use non-discretionary "pass/fail" criteria. Post-qualification of bids shall also be conducted.

All particulars relative to Eligibility Statement and Screening, Bid Security, Performance Security, Pre-Bidding Conference, Evaluation of Bids, Post-Qualification and Award of Contract shall be governed by the pertinent provisions of R.A. 9184 and its Implementing Rules and Regulations (IRR).

The complete schedule of activities is listed, as follows:

Activities	Schedule
1. Issuance of Bid Documents	July 5 to July 15, 2005
2. Pre-bid conference	July 15, 2005, 10:00 A.M.
3. Opening of bids	July 27, 2005, 10:00 A.M.
4 Bid Evaluation	July 28, 2005, 2:00 P.M.
5. Post-Qualification	August 4, 2005, 2:00 P.M.
6. Notice of Award	August 9, 2005

Bid Documents will be available only to the prospective bidders upon payment of a non-refundable amount of TWO THOUSAND PESOS ONLY (P2,000.00) to the Cash Receipts Division, Office of the Provincial Treasurer.

The Provincial Government of Cebu assumes no responsibility whatsoever to compensate or indemnify bidders for any expenses incurred in the preparation of the bid.

(Sgd.) BERNARD E. CALDERON
BAC-GS Chairman

(PDI--July 5 & 12, 2005)

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INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

PNOC-Energy Development Corporation (PNOC-EDC) invites interested contractors to apply for eligibility and to bid for the project:

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The Approved Budget is P 4,850,000.00 chargeable against PNOC-EDC fund. The contract duration is One (1) year.

Application Forms for Eligibility and Bid Documents may be secured from the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group (c/o N.A. Nicolasora) starting **July 12, 2005** upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Pesos: **Two Hundred (Php200.00).**

For the purpose of clarifying certain issues, a pre-bid conference will be held on **July 22, 2005, 10:00 a.m.** at 1st Floor Building 5, PNOC-EDC, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, Metro Manila.

Applications for eligibility and sealed bids shall be received by the PNOC-EDC Contracts Administration Group at PNOC-EDC, 1st Floor Bldg. 5, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig City, Metro Manila, **not later than 2:00 p.m. on August 16, 2005** and shall be publicly opened immediately thereafter.

PNOC-EDC reserves the right to reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive any informality therein, to abort the bidding process, to accept such bids or to award any part of the work to any bidder whose bid is considered most advantageous to PNOC-EDC.

BAC CHAIRMAN

(PDI--July 12, 2005)

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NOTICE is given that the estate of the late FELICISIMO CIEGO was extrajudicially settled with SPA on May 26, 2005 per Doc. No. 466, Page 95, Book 19, Series of 2005 of Notary Public Jesus Bongon of Pasay City.
(PDI - July 12, 19 & 26, 2005)

PUBLIC NOTICES

LEGAL NOTICE

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THE ESTATE OF THE LATE JULIO DRILON DUMANCAS AND MARTA DIMAAPI DUMANCAS WERE EXTRAJUDICIALLY SETTLED AMONG THEIR HEIRS AS PER DOC. NO. 12 PAGE NO. 04 BOOK NO. 02 SERIES OF 2005 BEFORE NOTARY PUBLIC VILMA HILDA VILLANUEVA-FABELLA OF CITY OF PARAÑAQUE. (PDI JUNE 28, JULY 5 & 12, 2005)

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Republic of the Philippines

Conversion of Warehouse to Multi-Purpose Hall at South Luzon Operations & Maintenance

An existing old warehouse within the South Luzon Operations & Maintenance compound is proposed for conversion into an eight hundred sq.m. (800 sq.m.) concrete & steel structured multi-purpose hall for use of Transco's various activities and to also serve as sports gymnasium

[TRANS-05-CWMPHSLOM-EG-03]

The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM**, through the Internal Cash Generation (ICG) intends to apply the sum of Twelve Million One Hundred Sixty Five Thousand Two Hundred Nineteen & 03/100 (Php12,165,219.03 being the Approved Budget for Contract (ABC) to payments under the contract for *conversion of Warehouse to Multi-Purpose Hall at South Luzon Operations & Maintenance.* Bids received in excess of the ABC shall be automatically rejected at Bid opening.

The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM** now invites potential Bidders to submit Letter of Intent (LOI) and apply for eligibility for the conversion of existing warehouse within the South Luzon Operations Maintenance compound to a multi-purpose building for various Transco activities and to also serve as sports gymnasium. Bidders should possess a valid PCAB license with ***License Particular of at least: "Category B, General Building"*** and ***Registration Particular of at least: "Medium A, Building & Industrial Plant"***, respectively, have completed a similar contract involving supply of all labor, materials, supervision necessary for the construction of all types of buildings, i.e., housing, schools, hospitals, market, multi-storey buildings, airport terminal and other related structures. The value of which should be at least 50% of at the ABC, and meet the other minimum eligibility requirements stated in the eligibility documents. Applications for eligibility will be evaluated on a "pass/fail" basis. The last day for submission of eligibility documents shall be on the same date of the opening of Eligibility documents: **July 26, 2005, 9:00 a.m.** at the address mentioned in the next succeeding paragraphs. Only those Bidders passing the eligibility check will be entitled to purchase the Bidding Document. Completion of the works is required by *160 calendar days.*

Bidding will be conducted through open competitive bidding procedures as specified in the Implementing Rules and Regulations Part A (IRR-A) of Republic Act No. 9184), otherwise known as the Government Procurement Reform Act, and is restricted, unless otherwise stated, to organizations with at least seventy-five percent (75%) interest or outstanding capital stock belonging to citizens of the Philippines. In accordance with IRR Part A of R.A. 9184, only bids from Bidders who passed the eligibility check will be opened. The bidder with the Lowest Calculated Bid (LCB) shall advance to the post-qualification stage in order to finally determine its responsiveness to the technical and financial requirements of the project. The contract shall then be awarded to the Lowest Calculated Responsive Bidder (LCRB) who was determined as such during post-qualification.

Interested Bidders shall secure the Eligibility documents from the BAC Secretariat at the address stated below, starting *July 06 to July 22, 2005 from 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.* upon payment of a non-refundable fee of Php 800.00. They shall submit their accomplished Eligibility Screening shall be held on *July 26, 2005, 9:30 a.m.* at the OAVP Conference Room B of the stated address.

Interested eligible Bidders may obtain further information from **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION**-*SLOM Regional Contracts Management Office (RCMO)* and inspect the Bidding Documents at the address given below from *8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. on August 17-19, 2005.*

A complete set of Bidding Documents may be purchased by Bidders that passed the eligibility check upon the presentation of the Notice of Eligibility to the BAC Secretariat, at the address below and upon payment of a non-refundable fee *Php5,000.00.* The Bidding Documents shall be received personally the bidder or his authorized representative starting *August 17-19, 2005, 8:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.*

The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM** will hold a Pre-Bid Conference open to all Eligible Bidders on August 24, 2005, 9:00 A.M. at the OAVP Conference Room Transco, SLOM San Vicente Biñan, Laguna.

Deadline for submission of bids is on September 06, 2005, 9:00 A.M. at the address below. All Bids must be accompanied by a Bid Security in any of the prescribed form indicated under Section 27.2 of R.A. 9184. Bid opening shall be on the same date. ***September 06, 2005, 9:30 A.M.*** at the ***OAVP Conference Room B of Transco SLOM.*** Late Bids shall not be accepted. Bids will be opened in the presence of the Bidders' representatives who choose to attend.

The **NATIONAL TRANSMISSION CORPORATION-SLOM** reserves the right to accept or reject any Bid, and to annul the bidding process and reject all Bids at any time prior to contract award, without therey incurring any liability to the affected Bidder or Bidders.

(PDI–July 12, 2005)

SUBIC BAY METROPOLITAN AUTHORITY
BIDS AND AWARDS COMMITTEE
Building 255 Barryman Road, Subic Bay Freeport Zone, Philippines 2222
TEL. NOS. (047) 252-4270 * 4214 * 4124 FAX NO. (047) 252-4284

SBMABAC-INV-002-05

JULY 8, 2005

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

All parties interested to bid for the below-listed items are invited to apply for application for eligibility and to bid with the Subic Bay Metropolitan Authority (SBMA), Subic Bay Freeport Zone. Only eligible contractors/suppliers will be invited to participate in the bidding of the below-listed items:

A. Items

Items	DESCRIPTION		APPROVED BUDGET
ITEM I	OFFICE SUPPLIES (LOT)	P	1,597,977.98
ITEM II	HARDWARE AND ELECTRICAL SUPPLIES (LOT)	P	313,856.95
ITEM III	TABLES AND CHAIRS, HIGH QUALITY PLASTIC (LOT)	P	74,000.00
ITEM IV	NINE (9) UNITS VEHICLE, PASSENGER WAGON	P	6,390,000.00
ITEM V	ONE (1) YEAR CONTRACT FOR PHOTOCOPYING SERVICES	P	2,100,000.00

Scope of Work : The SBMA seeks for a photocopying firm capable of providing complete solution to its photocopying requirements which shall be on a rental/lease scheme for the period of one (1) year.

The firm to be engaged for the services shall provide the SBMA with the latest technology in reproduction photocopying equipment or machine that will satisfy the requirements of the SBMA photocopying needs, and ensure that all the equipments are in perfect working condition at all times and all throughout the duration of the contract by regular preventive maintenance program and repair service(s) as required.

B. Complete information/requirements of the subject items to bid and the Terms of Reference (TOR) of the project will be provided upon issuance of bidding documents to all applicant suppliers/contractors.

C. Application Particulars for Eligibility for submission by Interested Suppliers:

1. Articles of Incorporation
2. Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC) Registration (if in case of Corporation)
3. Certificate of Registration with the Dept. of Trade and Industry (if not corporation)
4. Valid Mayor's Permit
5. VAT Registration
6. Audited Financial Statement for the last two (2) years, 2003 and 2004 (should be stamped "received by" BIR, certified true copy in sealed envelope)
7. Company Profile
8. List of projects (past and present)
9. List of Clients
10. Prospective Bidder's statement that he is not "blacklisted" from any other government/ private companies.
11. Tax Returns (duly stamped received by the BIR) and Tax Clearance
12. Prospective Bidders shall certify under oath (Sec. 23.8 or RA 9184):
    - that each of the documents submitted in satisfaction of eligibility requirements is an authentic and original copy or a true and faithful reproduction or copy of the original;
    - complete; and
    - that all statements and information therein are true and correct.
13. Authorization of Official Signatory (duly notarized)

D. Issuance of Bidding Documents and Site Inspection is on **July 25, 26 and 27, 2005 up to 5:00 p.m.** at the cost of **P1,500.00** which is non refundable

E. Pre-Bid Conference schedule is on July 27, 2005 (Wednesday), 2:00 p.m.

F. Deadline for submission of Eligibility Requirements, Technical and Financial Proposals, Opening of Bids will be announced during the Pre-Bid Conference.

All particulars relative to the eligibility process, bidding, evaluation of bids and award of contract shall be governed by and its Implementing Rules and Regulation (IRR) of RA 9184 otherwise known as the "Government Procurement Reform Act".

SBMA reserves the right to reject any and all bids, waive any defect therein and accept the offer it deems most advantageous to the Government.

(Sgd.) ATTY. JOCELYN G. ALVARADO
BAC Chairman

For inquiries please call:
BAC Secretariat
Tel. No. (047) 252-4210 / 4283
Fax No. (047) 252-4284/4251
PPMD Office
Bldg. 225, Barryman Road
Subic Bay Freeport Zone

(PDI – July 12 & 20, 2005)

PHILIPPINE DAILY
INQUIRER
BALANCED NEWS, FEARLESS VIEWS

CREBA
expo
2005
OUR WORLD UNDER ONE ROOF.

CREBA EXPO 2005

The **Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Association (CREBA)** will hold the country's first-ever Developer's Summit – **CREBA Expo 2005** – carrying the theme ***"Our World Under One Roof".***

Over 500 developers, government agencies, local government units, schools, media outfits, banks, private and public financing institutions and suppliers and contractors will gather at the World Trade Center on July 27 to 30 to participate in the said event.

In support of the program, the **Philippine Daily Inquirer** will publish a special tabloid sized supplement dubbed as **CREBA EXPO 2005** on ***July 24, 2005.*** This magazine, dedicated to the biggest exhibit in the country's real estate and construction industry, promises to provide maximum media mileage to you, our advertisers.

Placing an ad in this supplement ensures:

1. **Full color advertising with NO color surcharge *(the 80% surcharge will be waived)***
2. **Reasonable price**

AD SIZE	WIDTH x HEIGHT	AMOUNT
Full Page	24.6 cms x 30 cms	56,595.00
Half Page	24.6 cms x 15 cms	28,297.50
1/4Page	12.3 cms x 15 cms	14,148.75
1/8 Page	12.3 cms x 7.5 cms	7,074.38

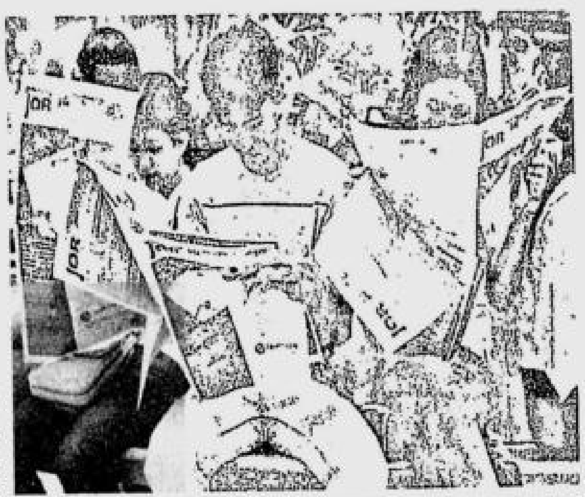
ACCEPTABLE AD MATERIAL : **TIF Format**
300 Pixels Per Inch (resolution)
CMYK Mode
MATERIAL DEADLINE **July 21, 2005**

3. **Circulation within Metro Manila**
4. **Free copies of the CREBA Magazine to be distributed on July 27-30, 2005 during CREBA Expo 2005 event proper**
5. **Insert on Inquirer's July 24, 2005 issue.**

For your concerns please call **Ms. Adela G. Mendoza at 421-0343 or 421-1420** or **email agarcia@inquirer.com.ph**

JOBZ OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT EXPO

July 28 – 30, 2005 Metro Point Mall



The Philippine Daily Inquirer's Job Market together with Ayala Land, Inc. bring forth **JOBZ: Overseas Employment Expo 2005.** On July 28 – 30, the Activity Center of Metro Point Mall will be transformed into an employment hub for the country's top overseas recruitment agencies.

Located at the corner of EDSA and Taft Ave, it is the only shopping center linked to the two of the busiest transport centers in Metro Manila: the LRT 1 and MRT Taft Station, with the mall's third level connected to the LRT EDSA station thus ensuring accessibility and heavy foot traffic.

METRO POINT
MALL
PASAY TAFT ROTONDA

Overseas employment opportunities will abound – guaranteed NO collection of placement fees!

By simply joining, we guarantee your company:
= PREMIUM EXPOSURE
= BIG BREAK
= GOOD VALUE

PLUS! A special two (2) for one (1) promo for all exhibitors participation in the **JOBZ: Overseas Employment Expo and ONE (1) FREE TABLE** at the **Chamber of Real Estate and Builders Association (CREBA) Job Fair** at the **Philippine Trade Training Center on July 27 to 29,**

For more information, please contact any Inquirer Classified Ads branch.

Be an EXHIBITOR in JOBZ: OVERSEAS EMPLOYMENT EXPO at METRO POINT MALL for a fee of PHP 20,000 (VAT inclusive) and get the following perks:

1. A six (6) square meter booth shell scheme, carpeted, wallpaper booth inclusive of an information table, 2 stacking chairs, spot lights, and a 220V convenience outlet and the company's name posted on the fascia board;
2. One (1) FREE 60 col.cm recruitment advertisement in the July 24 issue of the Job Market (you can opt to increase your ad size, and just pay for the added space);
3. One (1) FREE chiclet advertisement (2 cols x 4 cms) in Inquirer Libre Job Market (July 26 issue)
4. The inclusion of the following in a minimum of ten (10) computers at the career fair, to be found within Job Market's website – www.jobmarketonline.com:
    - Company profile
    - Company logo
    - Up to five (5) job postings
5. The FREE posting of the aforementioned in the online version of Job Market for three weeks from July 24 to August 13;
6. Prominent inclusion of the company name in at least two (2) half-page ads prior to the event (provided that the exhibitor confirms its placement – i.e. no cancellation on or before July 18, 2005);
7. The distribution of the July 24 issue of Job Market, including the ad of the exhibitor during the event;
8. Inclusion of the exhibitor's company profile (1,000 characters) in the Job Market print and online pages;
9. FREE access to the Resumé Reserve databank;
10. FREE job postings via SMS

PHILIPPINE DAILY INQUIRER | JOB Market | JOB Market

MAKATI (MAIN):
PASONG TAMO AVE., COR. YAGUE AND MASCARDO STS. MAKATI CITY
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main_classifieds@inquirer.com.ph

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811-4165 / 811-4012
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🖷 528-0213
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899-4427 (Direct)
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☎ 897-8425 (Direct) ☎ 8978808 (Trunk) Fax 8978425
G/F ATRIUM BLDG., MAKATI AVENUE, MAKATI CITY
☎ 8114361 ☎ 8114370 ☎ 8114012 Fax 8925578
ST. ANTHONY'S BLDG., AURORA BLVD., QUEZON CITY
☎ 912-9008-11 Fax 912-9011
SM MEGAMALL, MANDALUYONG CITY
☎ 6350219 ☎ 6872354 ☎ 6872366 Fax 6350220
G/F TRINITY BLDG., 636 T.M. KALAW ST., ERMITA, MANILA
☎ 5273342 ☎ 522-4406 ☎ 5276357 Fax 5280213
ALABANG, MUNTINLUPA CITY
☎ 0424503 ☎ 8506465 Fax 8506465
e-mail address: main_classifieds@inquirer.com.ph

OBITUARIES

THE HERITAGE PARK
FORT BONIFACIO
Funeral Home and Crematory
845-2334 to 38; 845-2440

ADELA REYES NOVELLES

Passed away in the Grace of our Lord
on July 9, 2005 at the age of 79.

Her husband **Cresencio Novelles**; children/children-in-law **Leny, Rene-Lu, Cris-Meng**; and grand/great grandchildren **Pen-Hazel, JP-Lissa, Agatha, Jon, Len-Len, Cate, Christian, Claudine, Gabby, Raffy**.

Her body lies in state at Arlington East the Garden Chapels, 1354 C. Raymundo Ave., Cor. Mercedes Ave., San Miguel, Pasig City.

Interment will be on July 14, 2005
after the 1:00 p.m. Mass at Capilla C
of Arlington Chapels.

Death Notices

FABIOLA C. SIONIL

joined her creator on July 11,2005. She was 78.

She is survived by her children, grandchildren and great grandchildren.

Her remains lie in state at the Lumbay Room, Funeraria Paz at the Manila Memorial Park in Sucat, Paranaque City. Interment is on Thursday, July 14 at 11 a.m.

— oOo —

FELICIDAD B. LAYGO

*Now peacefully in the infinite Grace and Goodness
of the Lord on the 8th of July, 2005*

Her remains lie in state at her residence, 27 Modern Village, Paciano Rizal, Calamba City, Laguna.

Interment will be today, July 12, 2005 at 1:00 p.m.
after offering the Mass.

> "...absent from the body to be present with the Lord."
> — 2 Corinthians 5:8

LORETO FACUNDO SORIANO

"TITAY"

*Peacefully joined her Creator
on July 10, 2005 at the age of 87.*

Her loving daughter, **Carmen** and son-in-law **Clody Antonio**; grandchildren **Tonette** and **J. Carina, Vincent** and **Tricia**; great grandchidren **Katrina** and **Miggy**, nieces and nephews and relatives request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at St. Therese of Lisieux Chapel, St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Memorial Chapels, Magallanes Village, Makati City.

Funeral mass will be held on Thursday, July 14, 2005 at 8:00 o'clock a.m. at the St. Alphonsus Mary de Liguori Memorial Chapel. Cremation will follow at the Manila Memorial Crematorium, Parañaque City at 10 o'clock a.m.

Message of Thanks

We, the family of the late

PRISCA ALDABA PINEDA-NICOLAS

**PGH School of Nursing - 1951
of Malolos, Bulacan**

*who passed away in the Grace
of our Lord on July 2, 2005*

wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all those who offered Masses and prayers, sent flowers and message of sympathy and who, in countless ways, condoled with and comforted us in our hour of bereavement.

Estrella Belleza Melliza

Widow of **Atty. Domingo B. Melliza**

Peacefully joined our Creator on July 10, 2005.

Sister, **CONSOLACION**

Loving children,

RODY & CELESTE (†), and grandchildren, **JB & LIWAY, ROCELLE, NONOY & BABY, TELTEL & JAMES**, and great grandchildren, **MANONG & KUYA**, and **VINCENT**,

CYNTHIA & HENRY, and grandchildren, **ANDREA & ERIKA**,

DANNY & TRINA

Family, relatives and friends request pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of her soul.

Her remains lie in state at Chapel 4, St. Alphonsus de Liguori Church, Magallanes Village, Makati.

Interment is tentatively scheduled on Wednesday, July 13, 2005, after offering the Mass at 9:00 a.m.

SULPICIO T. GAYONDATO

**Retiree of
United Laboratories, Inc.**

*Died in the Grace of our Lord
on July 11, 2005 at the age of 72.*

His body lies in state at his residence at 15-242 Brg. Miranda, Pontevedra, Negros Occidental.

Interment to be announced later.

Message of Thanks

We the family of the late

ROMULO V. BALAGOT

*Who passed away in the
Grace of our Lord on July 5, 2005*

wish to express our heartfelt gratitude and sincerest appreciation to all those who offered masses and prayers, sent flowers and messages of sympathy and who, in countless ways, condoled with and comforted us in our hour of bereavement.

For the needs of your departed Loved Ones, the following establishments can help you.

METRO MANILA

•LAS PIÑAS
FUNERARIA FILIPINAS
187 Real St., Zapote Alabang, Las Piñas;
Tels. 873-0507; 873-0024

•MAKATI
DON BOSCO CHAPELS
Pasay Road, Makati City; Tel. 894-5932 to 34
FUNERARIA FILIPINAS
865 J.P. Rizal St., Poblacion, Makati City;
Tels. 890-3556; 899-8191
LOYOLA MEMORIAL CHAPELS
EDSA cor. Bernardino St., Guadalupe, Makati City;
Tels. 895-1011 to 19
MALABED FUNERAL SERVICE
3-A Coronado St., Guadalupe Viejo, Makati City; Tel. 890-63-18
SANTUARIO DE SAN ANTONIO PARISH
Forbes Park, Makati City;
Tel. Nos. 843-8838/30; Fax No. 843-9223
ST. ALPHONSUS MARY DE LIGOURI PARISH
Magallanes Village, Makati City;
Tels. 852-8228; 852-7284

•MALABON
FLORESCO FUNERAL HOME
219 Gen. Luna St., Concepcion, Malabon, Metro Manila;
Tels. 2812963; 2813034; 2810522

•MANDALUYONG
SANTUARIO DE SAN JOSE PARISH
East Greenhills, Mandaluyong City;
Telefax 724-4139; 725-2044

•MANILA
DULCE MEMORIAL SERVICES
Jose Abad Santos Ave. cor. Dinalupihan St.,
Manuguit, Manila
Tels. 712-5102; 741-5125; 741-5133; Fax No. 711-3064
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
1501 C.M. Recto Ave. cor. T. Mapua, Manila;
Tels. 711-6931 to 35; 732-4795; 732-2827
POPULAR MEMORIAL CHAPELS, INC.
2141 Rizal Ave., Sta. Cruz, Manila;
Tel. Nos. 254-0867, 254-0839
ST. MARK MEMORIAL CHAPEL
16-15 G. Tuazon cor. Loreto St., Sampaloc, Manila;
Tels. 749-3679; 781-1772
UNIVERSAL FUNERAL SERVICE
& MEMORIAL CHAPELS
2028 Rizal Ave., Sta. Cruz, Manila;
Tels. 493-4458; 493-4540
WELINGTON FUNERAL SERVICES
1511 Gen. Luna St., Paco, Manila; Tel. 302-5447

•MARIKINA
ERIC SANTIAGO MEMORIAL CHAPELS
26 Bayanbayan Ave., Concepcion I, Marikina City;
Tels. 942-6044; 475-1177
F. SANTIAGO MEMORIAL HOMES
9 V. Gomez & 13 V. Gomez St., San Roque,
Marikina City;
Tels. 646-1725 or 646-1730
LOYOLA MEMORIAL PARK CHAPELS
& CREMATORY SERVICES
Loyola Memorial Park, A. Bonifacio Avenue,
Tañong, Marikina City
Tels. 941-3196 to 98; 941-3676; Telefax 941-3577
PAKET SANTIAGO MEMORIAL HOMES
13 V. Gomez St., San Roque, Marikina City;
Tels. 646-1725; 646-1730

•PARAÑAQUE
HOLY TRINITY MEMORIAL CHAPELS
Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat Rd., Sucat, Parañaque City;
Tels. 825-1296; 825-1291, Telefax: 825-1314
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, SUCAT, INC.
Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat, Parañaque;
Tels. 820-1592; 825-9947; 825-8635
LINCOLN MEMORIAL SERVICES, INC.
Ground Floor, JEMP Bldg., J. Cabarrus cor.
Monserrat Sts., Phase I,
BF Commercial Center, Parañaque, Metro Manila
RIZAL FUNERAL HOMES
8187 Dr. A. Santos Ave., Sucat, Parañaque City
Tels. 826-1376; 826-9682; (0915) 712-1220

•PASAY
RIZAL FUNERAL HOMES
438 Cementina St., Pasay City; Tels. 831-1204
VERONICA MEMORIAL HOMES
Official NBI Morgue 517-A Arnaiz St., Pasay City;
Tels. 831-3797; 844-7846; 843-1801; 845-4836

•PASIG
ARLINGTON EAST THE GARDEN CHAPELS
C. Raymundo St. cor. Mercedes Ave.,
San Miguel Ave., Pasig City
Tels. 747-8599; 747-8609 • Telefax 641-1760
FUNERARIA ANGEL QUIOGUE
No. 67 Pasig Boulevard Extension, Pasig City;
Tels. 641-7909; 641-1735

•QUEZON CITY
ARLINGTON MEMORIAL CHAPEL
12 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City;
Tels. 715-1025; 715-1031; 715-1027
LA FUNERARIA LAWRENCE BAQUIRAN
#23 Pato St., Project 2, Quezon City; Tel. 434-3258
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
143 G. Araneta Ave. cor. Kaliraya St., Quezon City
Tels. 749-3806 to 11; 712-3001; 743-6502 or 05
NACIONAL MEMORIAL HOMES
264 G. Araneta Avenue, Quezon City;
Tels. 713-5231 to 35; 714-0867; 714-0868
ST. PETER FUNERAL HOMES
296 Quezon Ave., Quezon City;
Tels. 372-5084; 410-9286/87

•TAGUIG-PATEROS
FUNERARIA ANGEL QUIOGUE
M. Almeda St., Pateros, Metro Manila;
Tels. 642-3010; 633-3602
GARDEN OF MEMORIES MEMORIAL PARK
Calsadang Bago, Pateros, Metro Manila;
Tels. 642-6181 to 82
HERITAGE PARK
Bayani Road, Fort Bonifacio, Taguig, Metro Manila
Tels. (DL) 845-2341 to 42; (TL) 845-2334 to 38
loc. 110/112

PROVINCIAL

•ALBAY
LIGÑON HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS, INC.
Bugtong Road, Legaspi City;
Tels. (052) 820-0188; 0917-2074152

•BACOLOD
ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Ground Flr. Rolling Hills Chapel,
27th-Lacson St., Mandalagan,
Bacolod City; Tel. 433-7132

•BAGUIO
LA FUNERARIA PAZ, INC.
79 Naguilian Rd., Baguio City;
Tel. (074) 443-3337; (074) 442-3117

•BATAAN
SANTUARIO GARDEN & CHAPELS
Talisay Road, Balanga City, Bataan;
Tels. (047) 2370643 • 7911766

•BULACAN
FUNERARIA TUASON
Poblacion, San Miguel, Bulacan 3011;
Tels. (044) 764-0281; 678-0266; (0917) 895-0603

•CAVITE
FUNERARIA SAMSON
145 Bayan Luma, Imus, Cavite;
Tels. (046) 471-3375; 471-2675
LA FUNERARIA SAPINOSO
G. Tirona St., Imus, Cavite;
Tels. (046) 471-3386; (046) 471-4417; (046) 571-1978

•CEBU
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Nivel Hills, Lahug, Cebu City;
Tels. 231-0721; 231-3192
CEBU ROLLING HILLS MEMORIAL CHAPELS INC.
Cebu Branch: A.S. Fortuna Street,
Banilad, Mandaue City, Cebu;
Tels. 346-2543; 346-2601

•DAVAO
COSMOPOLITAN FUNERAL HOMES, INC.
Camus Ext. cor. J. Abad Santos, Davao City;
Tels. (082) 227-1201; 227-1258

•ILOCOS
LA FUNERARIA LAWRENCE BAQUIRAN
#27 Crisologo St., Vigan, Ilocos Sur; Tel. 722-2730;
Cell (0917) 5680136; (0917) 5680145

•LAGUNA
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Gawâ, hindi dadâ at PMAP conference

REBUILDING the nation through a movement to jolt Filipinos into action is the message of the 42nd Annual Conference of the Personnel Management Association of the Philippines (PMAP). With the theme, "*Gawa, Hindi Dada!* (Delivering Results Thru Purposeful Action)", PMAP calls for sustained and purposeful series of actions so that a culture of success and excellence becomes a shared value and vision.

The conference will be appreciated by different types of organizations in all sectors of society who desire to improve the level of their performance. The event shall be akin to a roadman, where participants shall be armed with a mindset of urgency and collective action, yet made clearly aware of pitfalls, dead-ends and detours along the way.

PMAP leads the journey, taking off the initial plans and heading towards the final results that will be surveyed from the individual, organizational, and national points of view.

The 42nd PMAP Annual Conference will be held on September 28-30 at the Waterfront Hotel Lahug, Cebu City. For reservations and inquiries, contact the PMAP Professional Staff through telephone numbers (02) 726-1532/81/88 or email pmap@pmap.org.ph.

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PCGG, coco farmers seek to tap SMC dividends

By Christine A. Gaylican

THE PRESIDENTIAL Commission on Good Government and large groups of coconut farmers are hoping to tap the yearly dividends of San Miguel Foods Corp. arising from the disputed 27-percent stake in the food and beverage giant.

The 27-percent stake in SMC, which is said to be acquired using the coco levy fund collected from the farmers since the 1970s, is estimated to yield about P2 billion in dividends each year.

PCGG chair Camilo Sabio and several peoples' organizations, representing 3.5 million small coconut farmers nationwide, yesterday decided to immediately file a writ of execution and motion before the Sandiganbayan to tap the yearly dividends to finance projects for the sector.

"This has been agreed upon, and we hope to file the motion immediately," said Ka Vic Fabe, chair of the Pambansang Kilusan ng mga Samahang Magsasaka (Pakisama).

During a multi-sectoral meeting yesterday, Fabe said that the move would benefit the small coconut farmers, who needed the funds to finance replanting and other fertilization projects.

The Philippine Coconut Authority earlier warned that coconut production was on the decline. According to the PCA, the sector needs to embark on fertilization projects if it hopes to arrest the decline.

Also, the leaders of the Pambansang Koalisyon ng Mga Samahang Magsasaka at Manggagawa sa Niyugan (PKSMNN), yesterday proposed to set up a trust fund for the farmers.

Under the proposal, "the Department of Agriculture, the Philippine Coconut Authority, and farmer representatives will oversee the fund," said Efren Villaseñor, PKSMNN president.

The court dispute over the 27-percent stake in the food and beverage giant is far from settled.

According to Jose Marie Faustino, COIR executive director, there are still pending criminal cases against businessman Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco, arising from his use of the coco levy fund in acquiring stakes in different companies, particularly in San Miguel Corp.

Also, the Sandiganbayan has yet to decide on a number of civil cases involving the 98-percent stake in the United Coconut Planters Bank, aside from the reported 20-percent equity in SMC.

According to sources, Cojuangco wants to retain his 20-percent stake in SMC.

"This is a challenge to the Arroyo administration to hold its ground regarding the issue of the levies," said Faustino. "Every time the SC is about to come out with a decision in favor of the farmers, the opposition would always push for an out-of-court settlement."

In December 2001, the Supreme Court issued a decision declaring the coconut levy fund as *prima facie* public funds.

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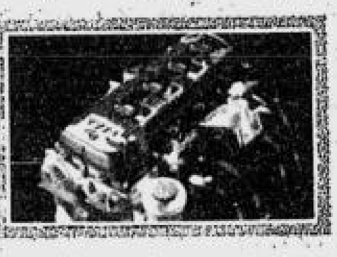

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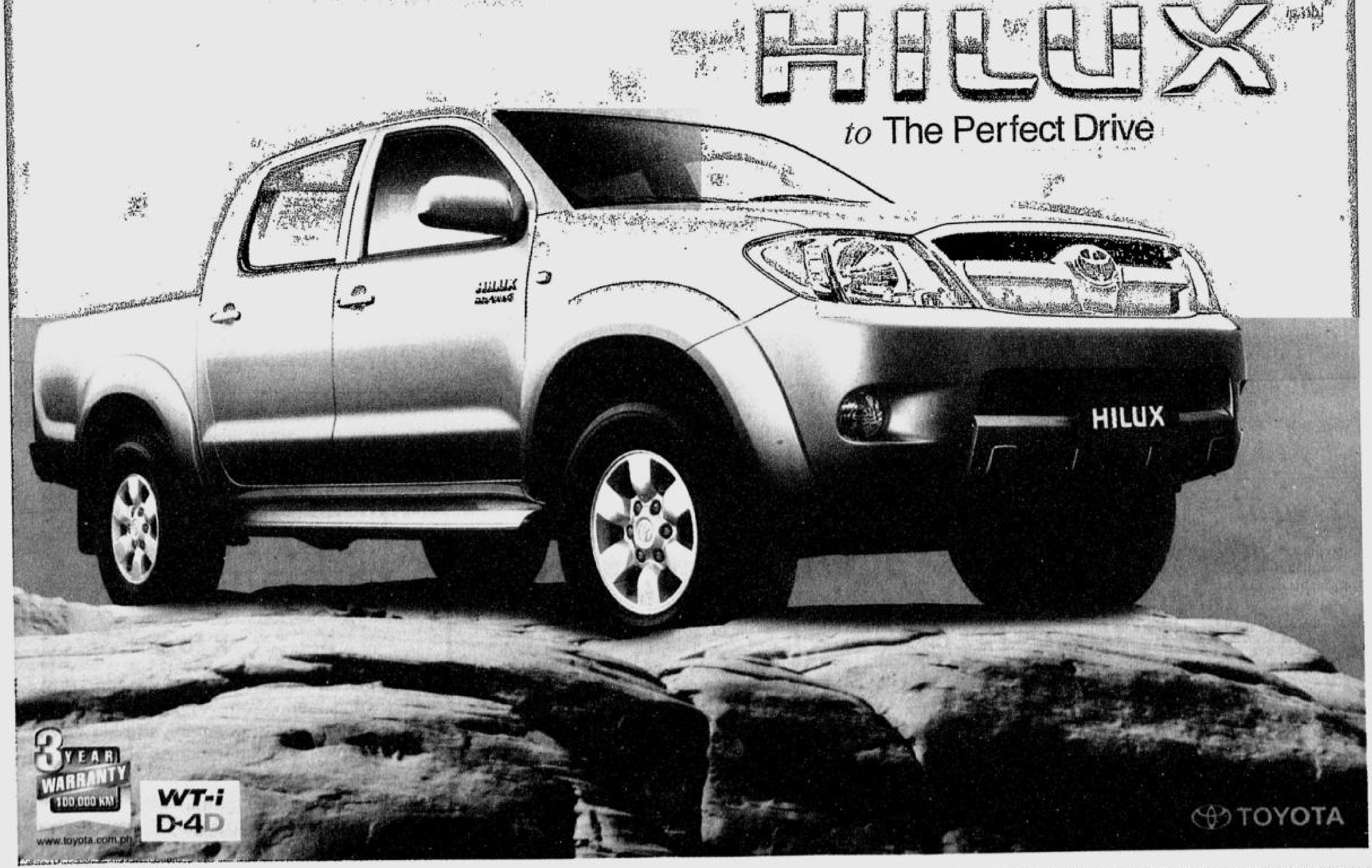

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To-do's that should be must-do's

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

THE LIST of things one can do to look and feel better seems endless.

Due to numerous requests, here's a partial list of to-do's that hopefully will become your must-do's one day. Wellness is a choice and, ideally, should become a way of life. Why not follow this Monday through Sunday regimen?

Daily:

- Greet a new day. When you open your eyes as night gives way to day, give thanks and affirm: "Thank you for the miracle that is today, Father." Open your eyes slowly, allowing light to softly greet you.
- Smile even before you get up. Stretch your body while still lying down.
- Get up, sit on your folded legs. Do a yoga pose, then bend and stretch your torso and arms forward, your face on the bed. Keep still for two minutes. Feel the pull on your spine. Breathe.
- Stand up. Face the eastern window where the sun rises, take deep breaths. Energize yourself. Affirm: "Today is a great day." Follow with your morning prayers.
- Drink 3-4 tbsp of virgin coconut oil (VCO available in Carica Kiosks, 7291508, 3026154) on an empty stomach. Take two capsules of acidophilous (live bacteria, available in health food stores). Drink one cup of warm water with one tablespoon of organic apple cider vinegar (Braggs, in supermarkets). After 20 minutes, take two glasses of tepid not cold water.
- Have a hearty breakfast, including a serving of fresh fruits (papaya, apple, chico, pineapple, kiwi, etc.), a glass of guava/orange juice mixed with C-Lium fiber (at Mercury Drug), a small bowl of hot oatmeal (preferably unsweetened or with two teaspoons of honey).
- Dress up in a happy mood. Take a look at yourself in the mirror and declare: "I am ready to face the world."
- Midmorning snack should be fresh fruit or nuts only.
- Lunch or dinner should start with two glasses of water, then fresh salad greens. Use a light not creamy dressing. Consume more fish than red meat or pork. Have only a small serving of sweets. Order a fresh fruit or vegetable juice (carrot-apple is a popular choice).

Take your multivitamin/mineral supplement after lunch (like Pharmaton, etc.). If some vitamins have to be taken two times daily (like Lifepak of Pharmanex), do not take the evening dose too close to bedtime as you might be too energized and would be kept alert all night.

- Do your daily chores or routine with a positive attitude. Smile as often as possible. Speak words of encouragement to yourself like "You're a winner" or "You can do this."
- Meditate for 15-20 minutes daily to quiet your mind, heart and spirit. Invoke harmony in your life.
- Sleep (preferably before midnight) and say your evening prayers. Think happy thoughts before sleeping.
- Take a cup of hot herbal tea or my usual—ginger tea without sugar. Or simply "silver tea" (plain hot water) after meals. Make sure it doesn't scald your throat.

Thrice weekly

Do your gym routine, 30 minutes cardiovascular or treadmill, then one hour resistance training. You may join a dance, yoga/Pilates class to vary your routine but don't fail to weight-train as it's needed to sculpt the body.

Twice weekly

Walk briskly for 30-45 minutes. If you can do this daily, the best time is before sunrise or at sunset. Make sure you have the necessary athletic shoes for ankle and heel arch support. While walking, praise nature in all its glory.

Just before walking or exercise, drink one glass of water. Then take an extra glass immediately after a workout. Sip water as often as possible during exercise.

Power juices:

1 carrot, 1 carrot-1 sugar beet (fresh) or
1 apple
Blender and strain or run through a juicer. Drink up.
½ cucumber (seeded),
romaine lettuce (2 leaves)
1 carrot
1 tsp *malunggay* leaves
Take vegetable juice 2-3 times a week.

Life advocacies

Charity—Adopt a cause. Do community work. In order to be served, practice serving others. This is a universal law.

Healing—For healing to take place in our lives, try healing yourself first. The healer is inside you. Practice forgiveness by forgiving yourself then forgiving those who wronged you. Ask forgiveness from those you might have hurt consciously or unconsciously.

If the person you have wronged is not around or does not want to see you, forgiveness can be sought through meditation, speaking to his/her soul through divine mediation.

Soak baths

Every Saturday soak in a bath of 1 cup rock salt, ½ cup apple cider vinegar and ½ cup VCO. After seven minutes of soaking, scrub rock salt and VCO all over your body.

Sugar facial scrub:

Mix 2 tbsp of VCO with 1 tablespoon sugar and scrub your face gently for exfoliation.

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Get more accurate measurements

WELL AND GOOD

Tina Juan

Weigh yourself once a week or twice a month on the same day

THE ORDINARY weighing scale can only tell you your total weight. It cannot distinguish between water and fat. Neither can it tell you how much your muscles weigh or how heavy your bones are.

But it is the most common way to track people's weight-loss progress. So here are some tips on how to weigh yourself more accurately.

- Use the same scale all the time. Do not compare how much you weigh on different scales. What's important is you take a baseline measurement and monitor your progress from there.
- Weigh yourself once a week or twice a month on the same day. If you weigh yourself every day, you may become frustrated because weight can swing 2 to 3 pounds up or down due to fluid changes. For example, if you eat a lot of salty food, you retain more water. If you catch a stomach bug, you lose a lot of water from going to the bathroom more often than usual. You get a more realistic picture of your weight loss if you weigh yourself once a week.
- Do not weigh yourself several times a day. It makes no sense and can lead to scale neurosis.
- If you weigh yourself at night and in the morning, don't be surprised to see that you have lost between 2 to 3 pounds. This is due to evaporation of sweat and minute water droplets in your exhalation while you were sleeping. One cup of water equals half a pound.
- Weigh yourself first thing in the morning without any clothes or with minimal clothing after using the toilet and before eating or drinking anything.
- You weigh the lightest when you first wake up. You are also at your tallest height because gravity hasn't had a chance to compress your spine.
- Many women become bloated before and during their period. Don't bother weighing yourself at these times unless you enjoy being depressed.

GET MORE/ C3

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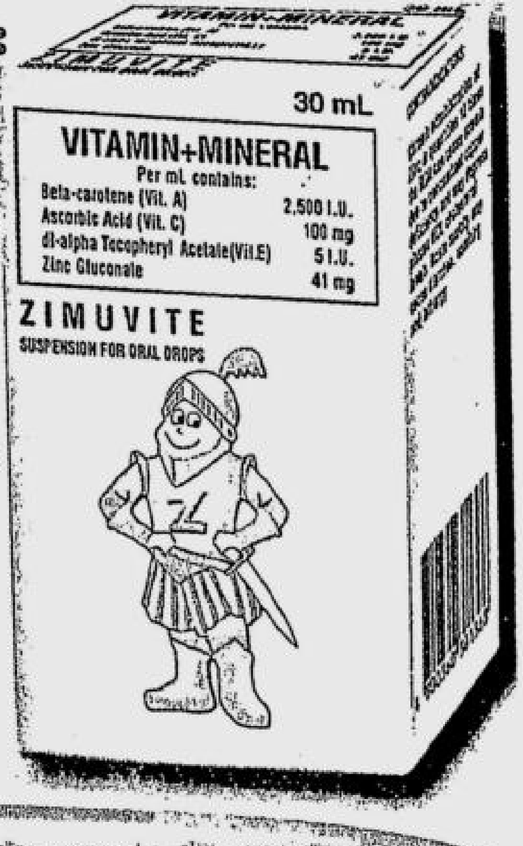
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A chip-per new card

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by Alex Van Hagen using **Kodak** EasyShare system

As *MOI* breezed in to the elegant Ayala Museum, I immediately noticed that the invitees were not people who attend every event in Cosmo Manille's social circuit. They were the high-net-worth, low-profile types, which was soo much more chic, *palanggas*.

The occasion was the unveiling of the latest product from the hard-to-beat Bank of the Philippine Islands and world-class MasterCard International—a credit card that promises greater security and peace of mind.

The new must-have card is the BPI Express Credit Golf MasterCard with the PaySafe System. It has the eye-catching feature of a microchip embedded on the card face. The chip, by helping ensure more secured transactions because of strong encryption capability, addresses concerns for security by cardholders, especially those who use their credit cards a lot.

Superbly hosting the happening were dashing and good-looking **Jaime Augusto Zobel de Ayala II**, president and CEO of Ayala Corporation and BPI chair; and articulate and brilliant **Aurelio "Gigi" Montinola III**, BPI president. They were joined by BPI's hotshot executives.

Waiters entered with 12 delectable dishes on huge platters, each dish, with exotic twists, representative of the countries in the program: France, Italy, Spain, Switzerland, Germany, United Kingdom, Brazil, South Africa, Japan, Turkey and Singapore. Finally, a five-gallon vessel was brought in containing the Philippines' signature dessert—*halo-halo*, *natch*, excellently prepared by talented mega chef **Sau** of M Café.

"These countries... illustrate the extent of territories around the world where one can already enjoy more secured transactions using the new BPI Express Credit Gold MasterCard," said Montinola, in his short welcome speech, *palanggas*.

Naturellement, totally satisfied with this launch were MasterCard hot mega personality **Andre Sekulic**, president, Asia/Pacific, Middle East and Africa; **Ajay Bhalla**, senior vice president and GM, Southeast Asia; **Jose Rene Villareal**, vice president and country manager, Philippines; **Judith Dayrit**, vice president for member relations and marketing; and mover and shaker southern gentleman, **Anton Corro**, director for operations and member relations.

I was told that sooner than soon, "all BPI credit card products will (have) the new chip as well, backed by the comprehensive global support program of MasterCard." Hey, that is soo cool, *n'est-ce pas*?

Bazaar

Everyone has heard or read about the must-go-to annual super happening of the International Bazaar Foundation Inc. (IBF) established in 1966 by **Angela Valdez Ramos**, wife of former Secretary of Foreign Affairs **Narciso R. Ramos**, *palanggas*.

Well, this year, it's everyone's favorite lovely lady, **Lovely Romulo**, no less, who is overall IBF chair. She has already began preparations for the event to be held Nov. 20 at Halls B & C of the World Trade Center in Pasay, with the commitment and support of members of the cool civic-oriented Spouses of Heads of Mission, headed by eye-catching statuesque southern lady, Señora **Aurora Lapuz Sagaz**, and the participation of the chi-chi diplo set.

We can all look forward to awesome goods and foods from all over the world at super reasonable prices.

"This yearly bazaar usually takes place in November to raise funds for underprivileged children in need of better education, medical care and livelihood skills training development," said Lovely R. during the coffee and lunch meeting at the Department of Foreign Affairs.

Hey, people, remember that this bazaar is not only a unique one-stop shopping "around the world" but is also a chance to contribute to the charitable work, of the IBF and the cool diplomatic corps of Manille.

Be there, *palanggas*. I know I will.

Big boys' toys

What makes cars exude power and sophistication? What is it about these big boys' toys that is so mesmerizing?

Well, *palanggas*, brilliant taipan **Robert Coyiuto**, chair of PGA Cars Inc., and the smooth Audi must know the secret. They had another coup with the unveiling of the new, cool Audi A6 series.

We couldn't help but stare at the elegance and awesome energy of this ultimate sports sedan, *palanggas*. One a black beauty, the other a sleek silver—both dream toys for any big boy. They were the stars of the show at the ultra-modern new PGA Cars Audi showroom on Edsa Mandaluyong.

The launch marked a fab partnership between PGA Cars Inc. and German prestige brand, Audi. "We vow to live up to our commitment of providing exciting and premium cars in the market, as well as delivering high quality customer and after sales services," a smiling Robert Coyiuto Jr. said.

The event was superbly hosted by glam TV journalist, the stylish and fashionable **Ces Drilon**. Eye-catching gorgeous models-turned-TV hosts, the fascinating **Phoemela Barranda** and the alluring **Amanda Griffin**, led statuesque models who marched down the red carpet for the unveiling of the new model, Audi's A6, together with Robert C. and Claudius Meynert, Audi director for Asia Pacific; and **Claus Korger**, Audi country manager.

The upbeat jazz group Blue Skin, and a lavish buffet from Carrera Café, plus overflowing booze, got invitees in the best party mood, *palanggas*.

"A century of tradition led by the leading car technology of Audi is what makes the new A6 a success. Since its launch last year, the company has already sold, (take note) 108,000 units worldwide, enough for the new A6 to be hailed as 'World Car of the Year 2004,'" says Claudius Meynert.

Among those who, like me, fell in love with Audi A6 were **Edison Coseteng**; former Central Bank governor **Jose Cuisia Jr.**; Cats Motors president **Felix Ang**; Judge **Cesar Cruz**; **Jose Cervantes** of PSE; brilliant and handsome **Lance Gokongwei** of the always on time Cebu Pacific; ABS-CBN Publishing's **Apa Ongpin**; **Emerson Yao** of Lucerne; debonair lawyer **Yakie Agana**; **Michael Tan** of Asia Brewery Inc.; **JV Borromeo** of GNC; Audi Club member **Diether Ocampo**, with Audi Club founder and president, **Manny Cabili**; and PGA Cars' hotshot executives headed by **Mike Coyiuto**, PGA Cars president; and VP for sales and marketing, **Amado del Rosario**.

Hey, *palanggas*, check out the PGA showroom and drive away in a cool Audi A6!

EXPRESS CR
LT
LD I

HOSTS Daphne Oseña and chef Fernando Aracama, with chef Sau of M Café (middle)

ALFRED Hahn Manila and Francisco Ortigas III of Concrete Aggregates Corp.

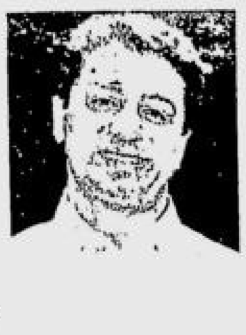
SAMMY and Stephanie Coyiuto

AUDI country manager Claus Korger

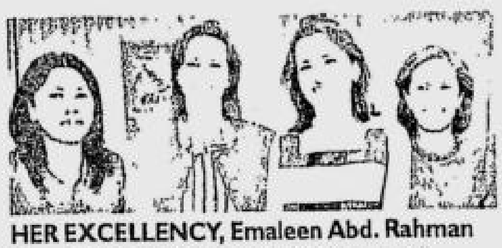
WINDY Imperial and Bombie Ricafort

THEY love cars. Chuchay Maronilla, Robert Syjuco, Tess Maronilla and Elit Pacho

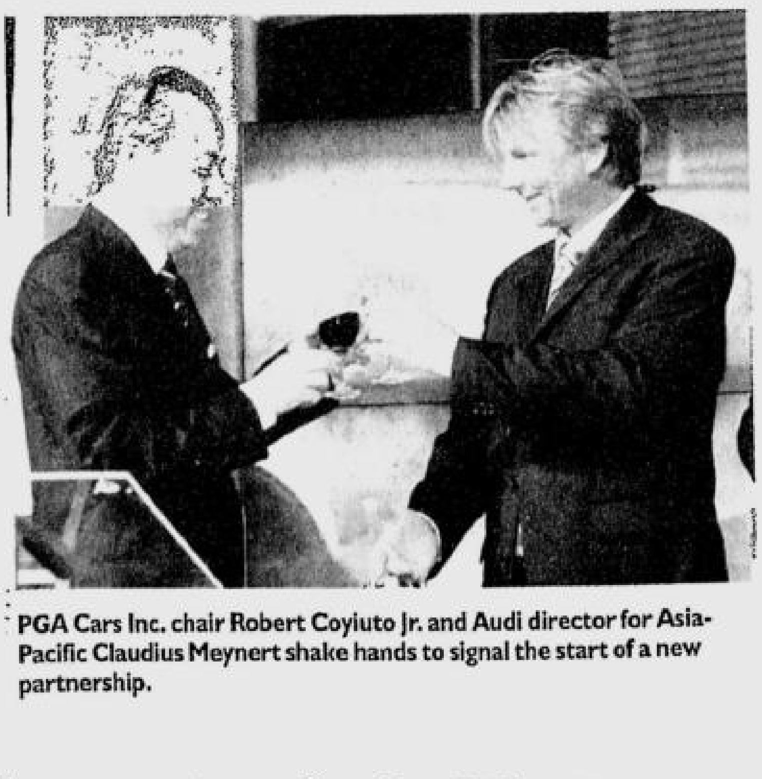
JIMMY Tang of Avesco



CHARITY-ORIENTED Mohammed Issam El-Debs of the Consulate of Syria



HER EXCELLENCY, Emaleen Abd. Rahman Teo of Brunei; Mme. Barbara Naude of Austria; Mme. Gul Tanghe of Belgium and Mme. Silvia Schuff of Argentina



PGA Cars Inc. chair Robert Coyiuto Jr. and Audi director for Asia-Pacific Claudius Meynert shake hands to signal the start of a new partnership.

PGA Cars Audi

STATUESQUE models Phoemela Barranda and Amanda Griffin with their dream car, the new Audi A6 in stunning silver

WOMEN OF SUBSTANCE. Aurora Lapuz Sagaz, wife of the Spanish ambassador and the woman behind this year's International Bazaar; Rosie Lovely T. Romulo, Sylvia Farolan, Jane Abacan and Delia Meñez-Rosal; (standing) Nora Salazar, Nati Aventura, Susie Ortigas, Tesoro's Alice Guerrero, glamorous Tess Alba, glamorous Mellie Ablaza, consul of Guatemala; Carrie Bautista; Victoria Zaide and Sonia Co

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Are Filipinos sadomasochists?

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

IF we merely rely on mass media to know what's happening in our country today, we would conclude there's nothing good left in us, that this country is surely going down the gutter.

It's really strange and rather amazing how we seem to enjoy seeing and reading about the sufferings of our people and leaders. Scandals in high places in government, or in high society, keep us glued to our television sets and radios. We can't seem to have enough of them.

Psychiatrists have a name for it: sadomasochism, a form of insanity. It is a pathological mental condition in which a person derives pleasure from suffering or pain and in inflicting pain on others. The most popular soap operas in the country depict maltreatment and the main characters' suffering.

No one likes to read, watch or listen to good news. So only bad things get reported. And we love to probe the smallest details. If there was a rape, people would want to know all the lurid details of how it was done and to whom.

These days, the focus of attention of the entire country is the reported wrongdoing of people in high places in government, as if this is something new. Yet the people's hunger for details seems insatiable and the mass media are giving what the people want, no matter how bad we may look to the outside world, or their effects on the economy.

While other countries take pains to downplay and even hide the bad things happening in their country, highlighting only the good ones, we Filipinos tend to do exactly the opposite. We enjoy displaying our dirty linen in public and ignore good reports. And we wonder why our country and our people have such a bad image abroad.

If we do not care how we look to outsiders, how can we expect them to respect us?

Negative thoughts seem to dominate the average Filipino's thinking processes, despite our legendary friendliness, hospitality and sense of humor.

We do not trust one another. The elaborate, time consuming and very strict internal control mechanisms in our bureaucratic procedures are based on the assumption that nobody can be trusted to do the right thing, that everybody will cheat, given the chance. That's why it is big, front page news when a lowly janitor or a taxi driver returns a lost bag containing hundreds of thousands of cash. No one expects him to do the right thing.

Although we do not expect our government officials to be completely honest and incorruptible, we like to pretend that they are. And that's why when there's a hint or, worse, evidence that an anomaly has been perpetrated by no less than the highest official of the government, everybody clamors that s/he be removed from office, as if we can find someone more honest and incorruptible than the incumbent one.

Christ said, "He who is without sin should cast the first stone." Maybe we should tell that to all critics of present, past or future administration. Maybe we should all ask that question of ourselves.

Are we all above suspicion ourselves? Have we never violated any law in our lives before, not even traffic rules?

Let's take a close look at all the current president's accusers and all those asking her to step down. Are they any better than the people they are criticizing? "He who is without sin should cast the first stone." This should be our criterion during these very confusing times.

It cannot be denied that President Gloria Arroyo has committed a grievous mistake and it is possible she attempted to cheat, if she did not actually do so. But may I know if there is any incumbent high level politician, past or present, who did not cheat at all?

This, of course, does not absolve a crime, if a crime had indeed been committed. If at all, the present sorry situation of our country only highlights our people's hypocrisy and our political and intellectual immaturity.

As a people we seem to suffer from a collective karma that we are unable to break or transcend. Only by a drastic shift in consciousness or awareness will we ever see real progress in all aspects of our society. Another revolution or change in government will not achieve this, unless accompanied by enlightened citizenry and leadership.

We, as a people, have already suffered too much in the hands of our politicians. But it will take time for us to change because we are sadomasochists. We love to inflict pain and suffering on our people and to experience pain and suffering ourselves.

The latest move by certain sectors of our society is a call for a Truth Commission to bring out what really happened during the last elections. But as I have always said, "Finding truth is not so hard; what is hard is not to run away from the truth once we have found it."

Address letters to this column to Prince Plaza I, 106 Legazpi St., Legazpi Village, Makati City. Call 8107245 or 8926806 for information on seminars I conduct. E-mail: jtlicauco@tri-isys.com or innerawareness_2005@yahoo.com. Visit http://www.jlicauco.short-url.com. Listen to my dzMM radio program 7:30-8:30 p.m. every Sunday

> Negative thoughts seem to dominate the average Filipino's thinking processes

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Get more accurate measurements

From page C1

- The most accurate scale is the type your doctor uses. However, make sure the scale is calibrated from time to time.
- The scale should be set on an even surface. Avoid using a scale on carpet, which can distort the results by 4 percent.
- Don't become obsessed with the scale. When you exercise regularly, it's not uncommon to be a size smaller but to weigh more than you think you should. This is why weighing yourself should not be the only method you use.

Tape measure

A tape measure can help you monitor changes in inches and body size. A tape measure and a scale make a good combination to keep track of the ups and downs of inches and pounds.

- Use a nylon tape. Cloth tape measures tend to stretch and become distorted over time.
- The tape should be snug and lay comfortably flat. Avoid pulling in to get a smaller measurement.
- Measure yourself once or twice a month right after weighing on the scale.
- Your measurements also change during the day as you accumulate more fluid from eating and drinking.
- Do not measure yourself before or during your period to avoid getting a "bloated" measurement.
- Take your chest and waist measurements as you exhale normally. You are only fooling yourself by cheating with a forced exaggerated exhalation.

Using the tape

- Chest: Measure at the nipple line.
- Waist: Measure at the smallest portion. People store their fat in different ways so look for the smallest part of the torso and take your measurement there even if your belly button seems strangely out of place.
- Hips: Measure at the widest part across your buttocks.
- Arms: Three inches above elbow or around the widest part.
- Thighs: Measure at the largest part of the curve of your inner thighs.
- Calves: Four inches below the knee or around the widest part.

According to Edward Jackowski, author of "Escape Your Shape," a tape measure can tell you whether your body is in the shape of a cone, spoon, ruler or hourglass.

- Cone: Chest and waist are relatively close in measurement while hips and thighs are significantly smaller than the chest.
- Spoon: No significant difference between chest and waist but a significant difference between hips and chest.
- Rulers: Chest, waist and hips are relatively close in measurement.
- Hourglass: There is at least a 6-inch difference between chest and waist and between hips and waist. The measurement of chest and hips is usually within a couple of inches of each other.

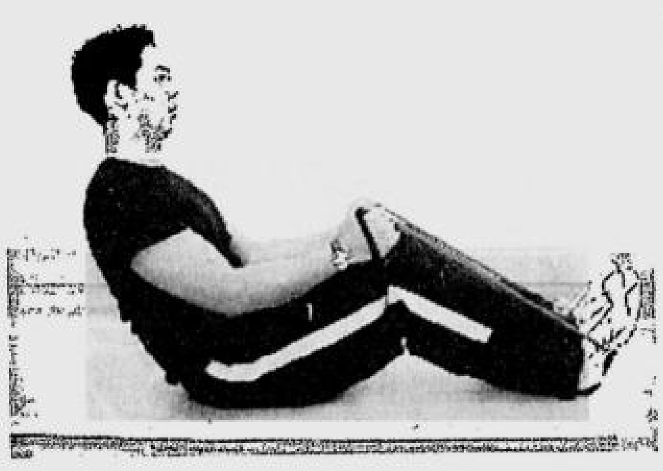
Clothes-o-meter

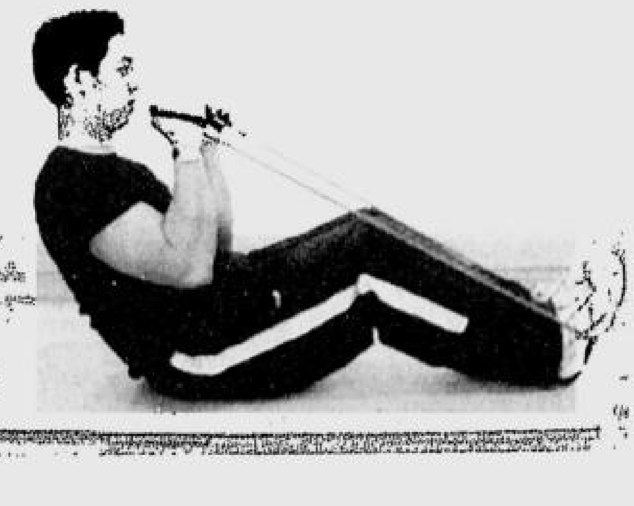
The most practical way to measure yourself is the way your clothes fit. A tight pair of jeans or a leather belt are good evidence of weight gain or loss. After I gained 50 pounds with my second child, my favorite jeans were the best and most satisfying gauge of my weight-loss progress. At first, I couldn't even get the jeans past my thighs. Little by little, I was able to slip them up my hips, zip up without turning blue, and eventually, wear them comfortably.

Visit www.tinajuanfitness.info

EXERCISE OF THE WEEK

V-sit with rubber band hammer curl





THIS EXERCISE strengthens the biceps, forearms, abdominal and lower back muscles as well as the quadriceps, muscles in front of the thighs. It also develops balance.

Equipment:

Exercise mat and rubber band or tubing

Exercise technique:

1. Sit with knees bent and legs together.
2. Loop the rubber band around the arch of your shoe.
3. Tighten your abdominal muscles and lean backward. Arms are slightly bent and the palms are facing each other.
4. Exhale as you curl the rubber band to your shoulders; inhale as you lower them.
5. Do the desired number of repetitions.

Performance tips:

1. Keep your abdominal muscles tight with your back straight as you lean backward. Avoid slouching. Your abdominals and lower back are working as stabilizers to maintain the position of your trunk.
2. This is an advanced exercise. Beginners should avoid it.
3. If you feel pain in the lower back or tailbone (coccyx), avoid this exercise.
4. To prevent the rubber band from accidentally slipping, make sure it is looped under the notch of the arch of your athletic shoe. Should the band slip, close your eyes immediately to protect them from injury.
5. Always check your band for tears before using it. Throw away any band with a tear.

Repetitions:

. Do 10-15 repetitions.

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What is a healthy way of losing weight?

Your body requires only a specific amount of calories to sustain your usual everyday activities. If you eat more than what your body needs, the excess will be stored as fat.

A weight loss of one to two pounds per week is healthy. More than that is not physiologic and will result to a slow down of your body's metabolism in an effort to conserve the remaining reserves, making it harder to lose more weight. Never believe in diets that promise you amazing results in a short period of time. If it works, it is because the dieter lowered her calorie intake drastically. A result from this is usually temporary. If you are not up to counting calories or do not have time to exercise, make small safe diet changes that you can sustain over a long period of time. This might be as simple as eating boiled instead of fried egg, passing up on dessert during dinner or holding out on the mayo in your burger meal. Lifestyle changes may also bring remarkable results. Try walking up the stairs to your office instead of using the elevator, or pick up something from the next office instead of asking the messenger to do it. Your patience will be tested, though, but the rewards are worth it.

This week's answer to our feature question on the healthy way to diet was provided by accredited doctor, **Dr. Dinah M. Urag.** *Dr. Urag, frequently Doc Dinah to patients and colleagues, is the Director for Clinical Services at Fortmed-Sta. Rosa. She is an Internist and has been providing quality healthcare services to MEDICard members since 1999. Doc Dinah's educational profile boasts of a degree in Medicine from the De La Salle University College, Internal Medicine residency completed in 1998 and an Associate Fellow with Philippine College of Physicians. MEDICard members may visit her for consultations at the Fortmed Medical Clinic in Sta. Rosa, Laguna from Mondays to Fridays, 10 AM to 4 PM and every Saturdays, from 10 AM to 12 noon.*

Nicky

MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. Write to Dr. Nicky or E-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for your inquiries on health matters.

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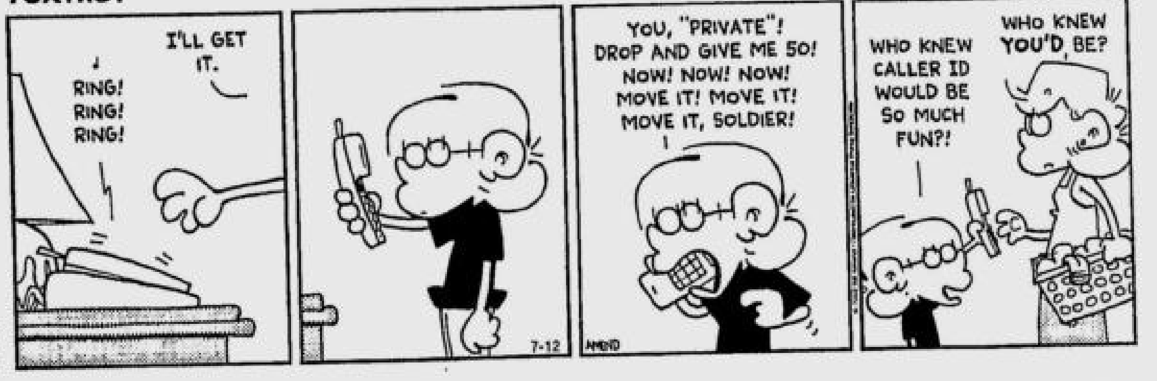
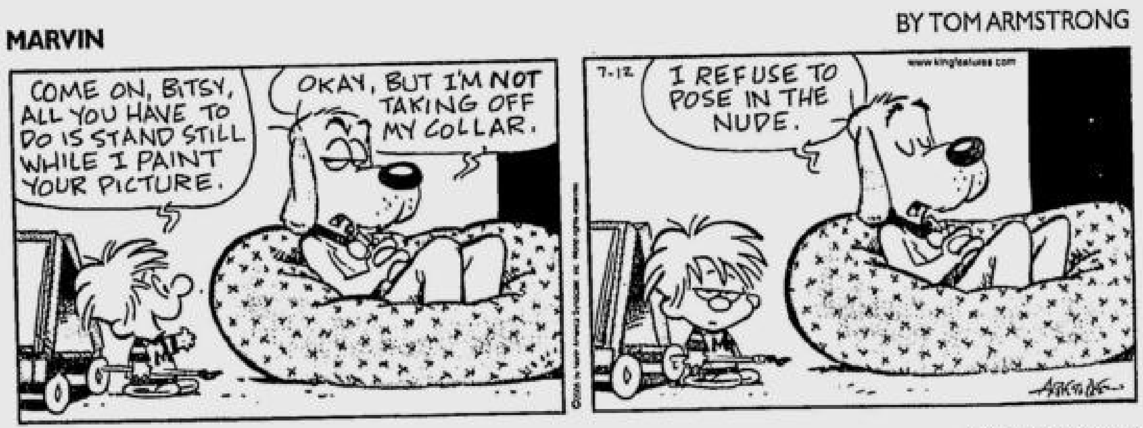
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


RING! RING! RING!
I'LL GET IT.
YOU, "PRIVATE"! DROP AND GIVE ME 50! NOW! NOW! NOW! MOVE IT! MOVE IT! MOVE IT, SOLDIER!
WHO KNEW CALLER ID WOULD BE SO MUCH FUN?!
WHO KNEW YOU'D BE?
7-12

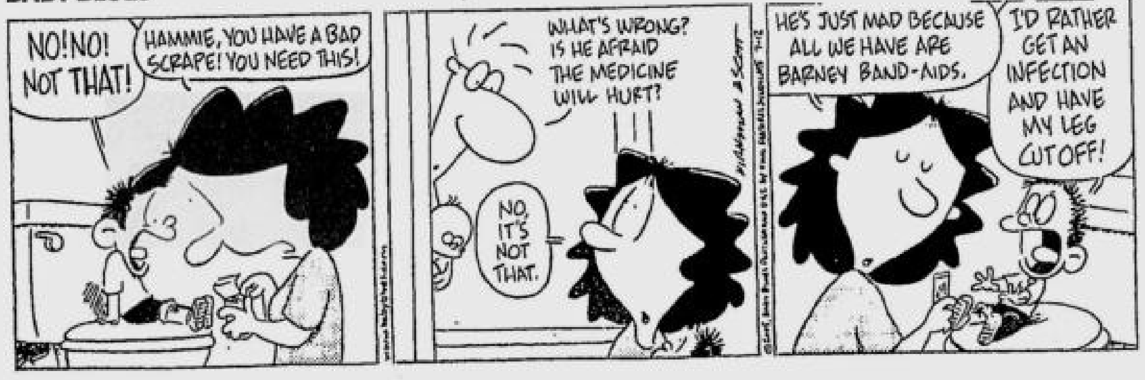
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


COME ON, BITSY, ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS STAND STILL WHILE I PAINT YOUR PICTURE.
OKAY, BUT I'M NOT TAKING OFF MY COLLAR.
7-12
I REFUSE TO POSE IN THE NUDE.
www.kingfeatures.com

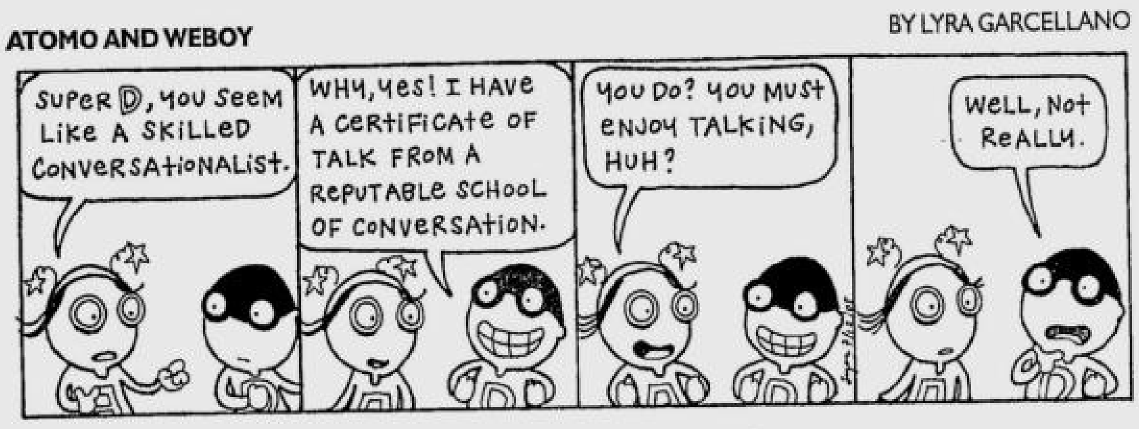
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


NO!NO! NOT THAT!
HAMMIE, YOU HAVE A BAD SCRAPE! YOU NEED THIS!
WHAT'S WRONG? IS HE AFRAID THE MEDICINE WILL HURT?
NO, IT'S NOT THAT.
HE'S JUST MAD BECAUSE ALL WE HAVE ARE BARNEY BAND-AIDS.
I'D RATHER GET AN INFECTION AND HAVE MY LEG CUT OFF!

ATOMO AND WEBOY

BY LYRA GARCELLANO


SUPER D, YOU SEEM LIKE A SKILLED CONVERSATIONALIST.
WHY, YES! I HAVE A CERTIFICATE OF TALK FROM A REPUTABLE SCHOOL OF CONVERSATION.
YOU DO? YOU MUST ENJOY TALKING, HUH?
WELL, NOT REALLY.

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have an original mind. Furthermore, you are convincing when presenting your ideas to others. You are particularly adept with humor because of your fine timing and your insight into people. Others admire your abilities. This year could be one of the most powerful, fortunate years of your life. Dream big. **Birthdate of:** Bill Cosby, comedian/actor; Buckminster Fuller, engineer, inventor; Julius Caesar, Roman ruler.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Avoid conflict with family members today, especially parents. You're full of fiery energy. If you can get more physical exercise, you can simply burn this aggression off.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You might be too quick to take offense at something a neighbor, sibling or relative says. Instead, take a breath and give somebody else more breathing room as well.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): Avoid arguments with friends or groups,being confrontational is what your knee-jerk reaction will be. Anger only makes everyone miserable.

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): You're very ambitious today! Be careful you don't steamroll over others in order to get your way or to make an impression on someone important.

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You're willing to strike a blow for your own freedom today. You don't want to answer to anyone. The truth is that you want adventure and escape from your routine. (Why not do something different today?)

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You feel distrustful about shared property or jointly held possessions. If others don't respect what you own, you will defend your position!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): Arguments can arise easily today. These can take place with partners, bosses or parents. You feel too independent to be told what to do.

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): Religious, political or philosophical conflicts are likely today. You're stuck in your point of view; someone else is stuck in his or her point of view. (Why not just agree to disagree?)

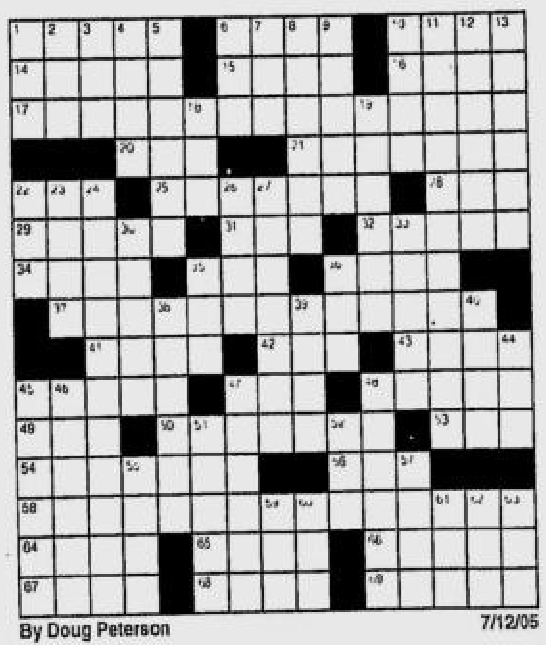
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You might not approve of someone else's approach to raising children. Refrain from criticism, unless you feel you have to protect the child. (Not all grownups are adults.)

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): You're on edge today dealing with family members and partners. You want to win an argument or make your point. Is it really worth it?

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): It's important to be patient with co-workers today. If you're not, you could become bossy or too aggressive about something. Since you don't want to do this, mellow out.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): The best way to use today's aggressive energy is to work hard. Lots of people are looking for a fight. Just stay focused on the job at hand. Be extra-patient with children.

DAILY CROSSWORD



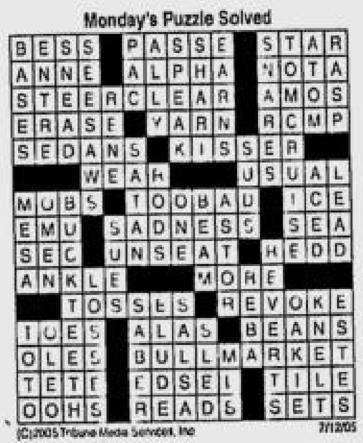
By Doug Peterson
Pasadena, CA

7/12/05

ACROSS
1 Rumbling with rumors
6 Plays on words
10 Con job
14 One-time Shatner co-star
15 Morales of "N.Y.P.D. Blue"
16 Folk history
17 Refuse to back down
20 Barbie's former beau
21 Twittered
22 Beverage dispenser
25 Navigation device
28 High-speed internet letters
29 Snapshot
31 "__ Gang"
32 Way too flabby
34 Prone to pry
35 Totality
36 Stop up
37 Hit the mother lode
41 Capital of Italia
42 Youngster
43 Landlocked Asian nation
45 Italian staircase
47 Loud noise
48 Broad necktie
49 Highland boy
50 Briefly sparkled
53 Tarzan on TV
54 Disneyland location
56 Boob tubes
58 Get real
64 Supermodel Heidi
65 Chihuahua kid
66 Shampooer's step
67 Lip
68 Fricassee
69 Amanda or Robert

DOWN
1 Ques. response
2 Tiny portion
3 Actress Thurman
4 Stupefy
5 Louisiana music
6 Slammer
7 Put into action
8 Daytona 500 org.
9 Audible breaths
10 Blackthorn
11 Decisive stroke
12 Marshal Dillon portrayer
13 Butt in
18 Lennon's love
19 Put back on the market
22 Ind. TV network
23 Greek letters
24 16th-century French astrologer
26 Pouty expression
27 Halloween purchase
30 Austrian alpine region
33 Seethes
35 Reggae relative
36 Dancer Charisse
38 Visualized
39 "__ She Sweet"
40 Implement
44 Porky's pen
45 Trousers
46 Type of oil
47 Chowderhead
48 Part of speech
51 Serengeti pride
52 WWII arena
55 Skirt edges
57 Jib or spanker
59 GPS heading
60 Haul
61 Genetic letters
62 Sound of disapproval
63 "__ Haw"

Monday's Puzzle Solved



BESS PASSE STAR
ANNE ALPHA NOTA
STEERCLEAR AMOS
ERASE YARN RCMP
SEDANS KISSER
WEAR USUAL
MOBS TOOBAD ICE
EMU SADNESS SEA
SEC UNSEAT HEED
ANKLE MORE
TOSSES REVOKE
TOES ALAS BEANS
OLES BULLMARKET
TETE EDSEL TILE
OOHS READS SETS

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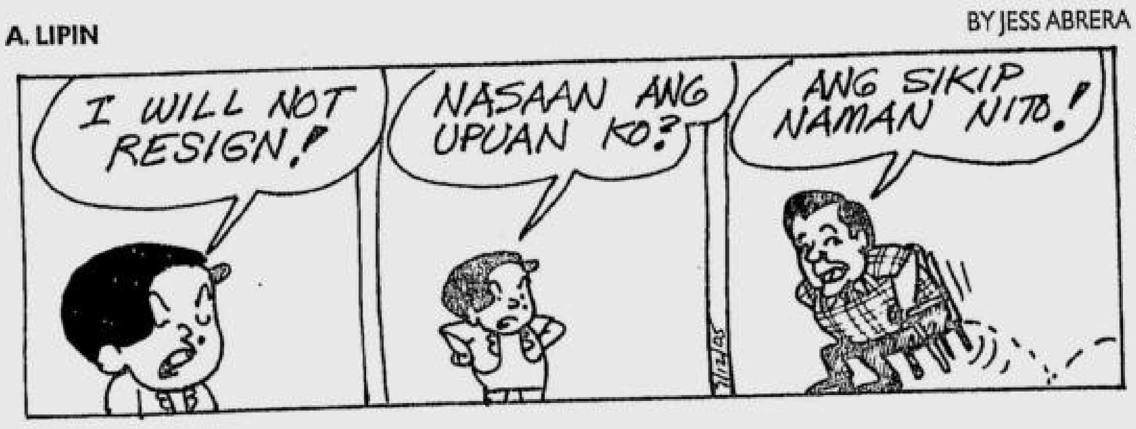
7/12/05

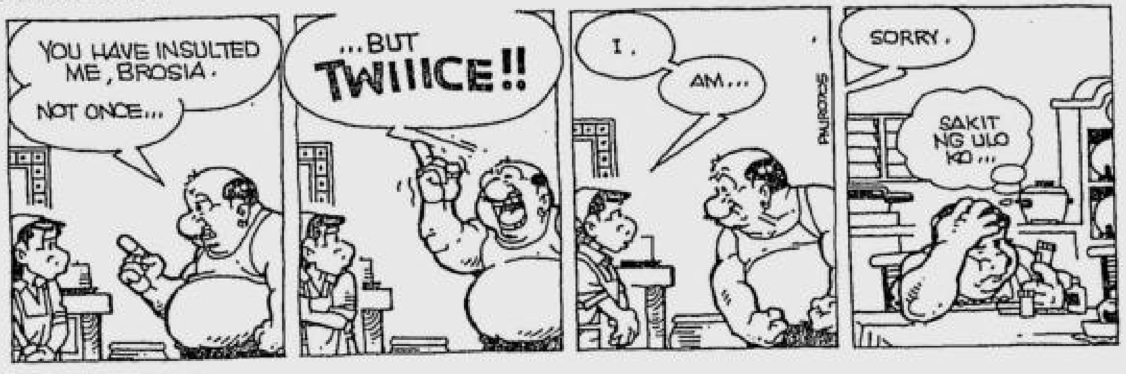
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


I WILL NOT RESIGN!
NASAAN ANG UPUAN KO?
ANG SIKIP NAMAN NITO!

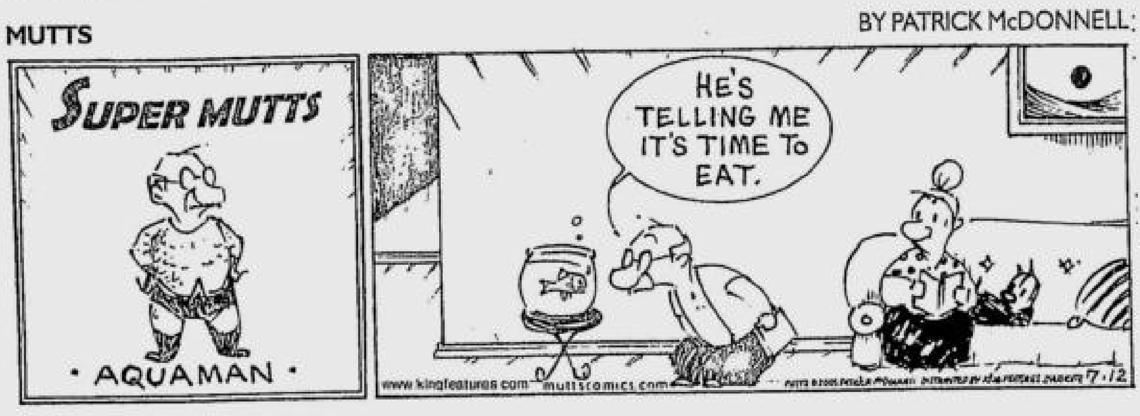
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


YOU HAVE INSULTED ME, BROSIA.
NOT ONCE...
...BUT TWIIICE!!
I.
AM...
SORRY.
SAKIT NG ULO KO...

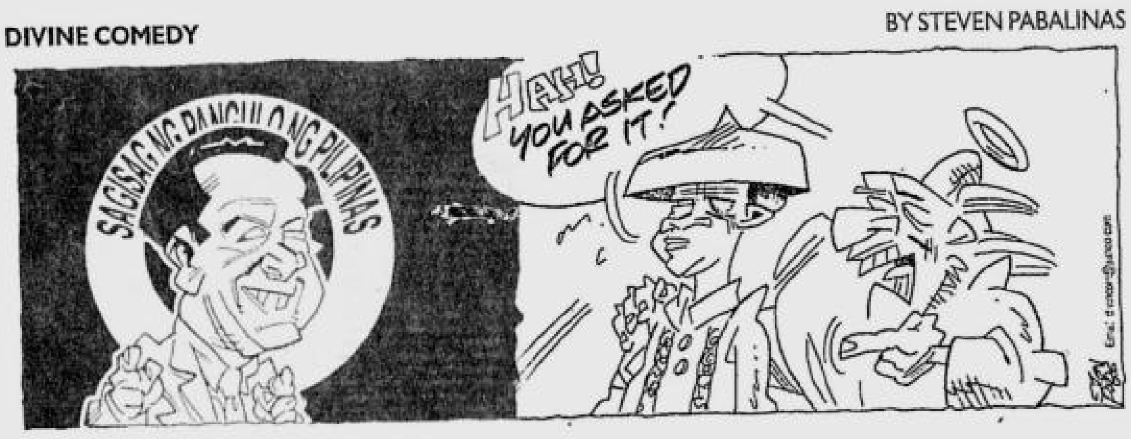
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


SUPER MUTTS
AQUAMAN
HE'S TELLING ME IT'S TIME TO EAT.
www.kingfeatures.com
muttscomics.com
7-12

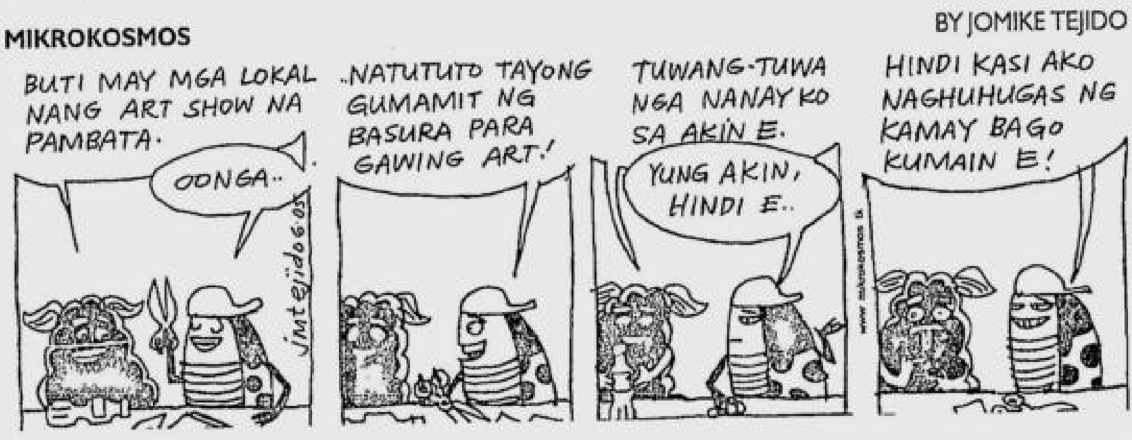
DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS


SAGISAG NG PANGULO NG PILIPINAS
HAH! YOU ASKED FOR IT!

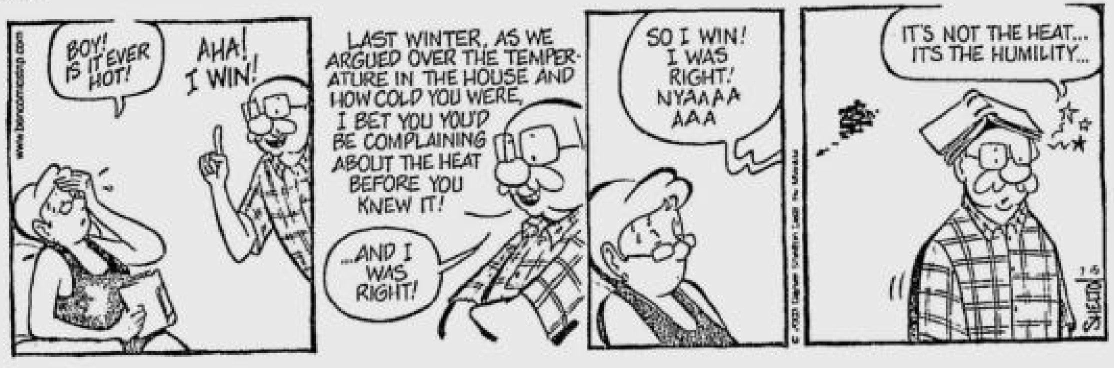
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


BUTI MAY MGA LOKAL NANG ART SHOW NA PAMBATA.
OONGA..
NATUTUTO TAYONG GUMAMIT NG BASURA PARA GAWING ART!
TUWANG-TUWA NGA NANAY KO SA AKIN E.
YUNG AKIN, HINDI E..
HINDI KASI AKO NAGHUHUGAS NG KAMAY BAGO KUMAIN E!

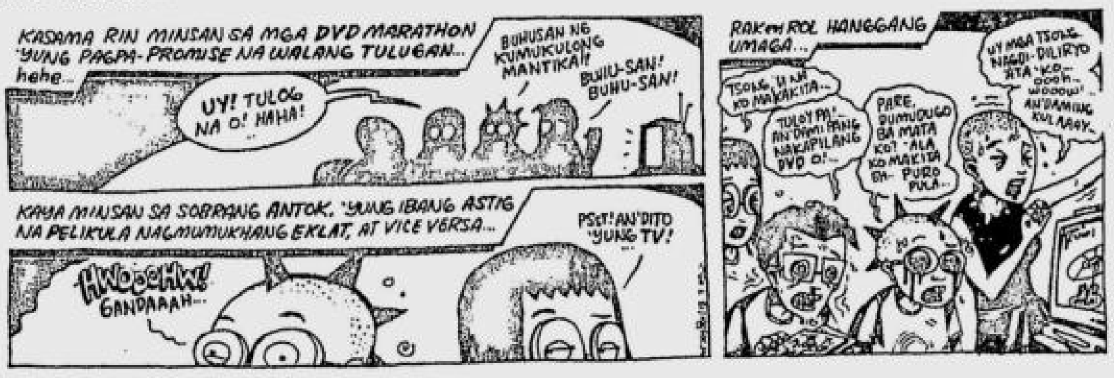
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


BOY! IS IT EVER HOT!
AHA! I WIN!
LAST WINTER, AS WE ARGUED OVER THE TEMPERATURE IN THE HOUSE AND HOW COLD YOU WERE, I BET YOU YOU'D BE COMPLAINING ABOUT THE HEAT BEFORE YOU KNEW IT!
...AND I WAS RIGHT!
SO I WIN! I WAS RIGHT! NYAAAA AAA
IT'S NOT THE HEAT... IT'S THE HUMILITY...

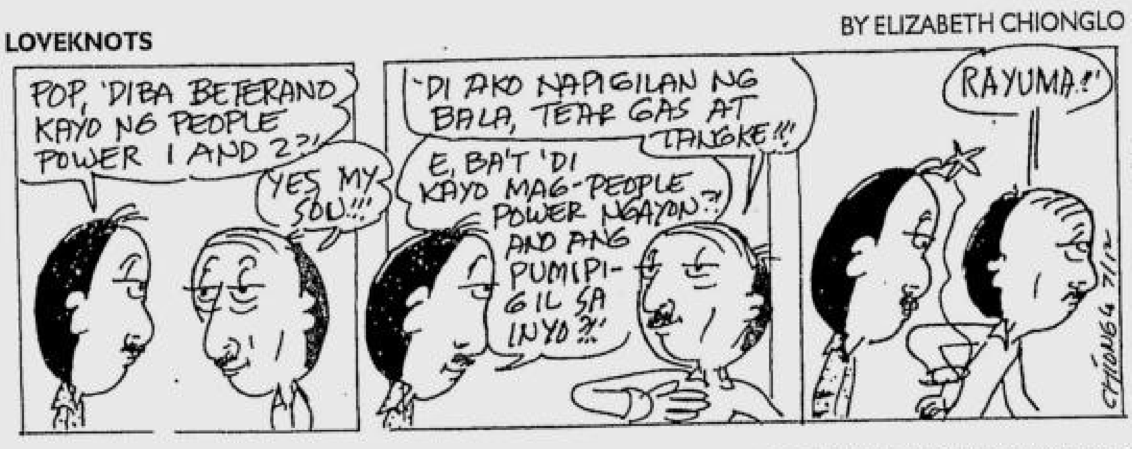
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


KASAMA RIN MINSAN SA MGA DVD MARATHON 'YUNG PAGPA-PROMISE NA WALANG TULUGAN... hehe..
UY! TULOG NA O! HAHA!
BUHUSAN NG KUMUKULONG MANTIKA!!
BUHU-SAN! BUHU-SAN!
KAYA MINSAN SA SOBRANG ANTOK, 'YUNG IBANG ASTIG NA PELIKULA NAGMUMUKHANG EKLAT, AT VICE VERSA...
HWOOCHW! GANDAAAH...
PSST! AN'DITO 'YUNG TV!
RAK en ROL HANGGANG UMAGA...
TSONG, 'DI NA KO MAKAKITA...
TULOY PA! AN'DAMI PANG NAKAPILANG DVD O!
PARE, DUMUDUGO BA MATA KO? 'ALA KO MAKITA EH- PURO PULA...
UY MGA TSONG, NAGDI-DILIRYO ATA KO... OOOH... WOOOW!.. AN'DAMING KULAAAY.

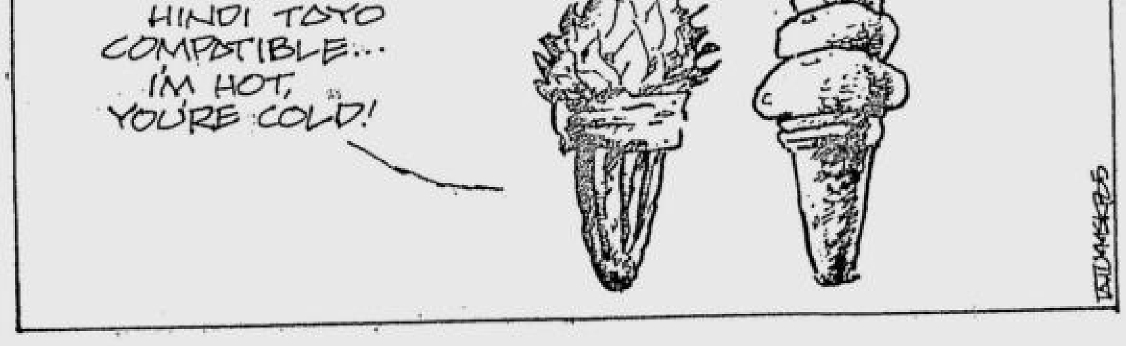
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


POP, 'DIBA BETERANO KAYO NG PEOPLE POWER 1 AND 2?!
YES MY SON!!!
'DI AKO NAPIGILAN NG BALA, TEAR GAS AT TANGKE!!!
E, BA'T 'DI KAYO MAG-PEOPLE POWER NGAYON?! AND ANG PUMIPIGIL SA INYO?!
RAYUMA!
CHIONG4 7/12

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


HINDI TAYO COMPATIBLE... I'M HOT, YOU'RE COLD!